

**Minutes of the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee Meeting held on 26
October 2020**

Present: Jeremy Pert (Chairman)

Attendance

Charlotte Atkins	Barbara Hughes
Philip Atkins, OBE	Dave Jones
Tina Clements	David Leytham
Janet England	Paul Northcott (Vice-Chairman)
Ann Edgeller	Kath Perry, MBE
Maureen Freeman	Bernard Peters
Phil Hewitt	Ross Ward
Jill Hood	

Apologies: Adam Clarke, Richard Ford, Janet Johnson and Ian Wilkes

PART ONE

30. Quorum

The Chairman verified that the meeting was quorate.

31. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

32. Minutes of meeting held on 14 September 2020

With regard to minute No. 26, the Scrutiny and Support Officer said that that the additional information requested by the Committee from North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group would be circulated to them as soon as possible.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2020 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

33. Adult Learning Disability 2022 Community Offer: Update on Learning Disability Services Directly Provided by Staffordshire County Council

The Committee considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing (Staffordshire County Council) (schedule 1 to the signed minutes) informing them of a recent review of the Authority's previous decisions taken in 2019 and forthcoming recommendations to Cabinet on 18 November 2020 in respect of (i) transitioning Greenfield House, Leek and Horninglow Bungalows, Burton-upon-Trent to the independent supported living market; (ii) capital investment for the relocation of directly provided residential care services currently situated at Hawthorne House, Lichfield to the Scotch Orchard site; (iii) capital investment for the relocation of the respite services currently provided at Douglas Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme to Wilmott Drive and; (iv) commissioning of residential replacement care services in Cannock Chase District and East Staffordshire Borough from the independent sector. The was to ensure the configuration of services remained appropriate having regard to the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, he informed them that following the suspension of a review of Specialist Day Care Opportunities in March 2020 owing to the above-mentioned outbreak, it was his intention to recommend Cabinet that the review be re-commenced and include:- (i) the current building-based provision; (ii) alternative methods of supporting people in their own homes (eg Outreach and Virtual) which had been developed following the outbreak to comply with social distancing guidelines; (iii) staffing and; (iv) the exploration of a business case for development of a Single Integrated Service.

In response to a request for their views on the above-mentioned developments/proposals the Committee scrutinised the report, asking questions and seeking clarification where necessary.

A Member raised concerns regarding the importance of maintaining friendship groups which might have been established at Greenfield House and Horninglow Bungalows, under the new arrangements.

Another Member spoke in support of the decisions taken in 2019 and against delaying their implementation particularly having regard to the quality of the services currently provided at Hawthorne House which she said were not fit for purpose. They stated that the increase in capital costs referred to in the report (£5.140m from £2.820m were to be expected and sought further details of the timescale for construction of the new facility. In reply, the Cabinet Member highlighted that the Net Present Value of the development was still positive. However, further progress was dependent on registration by the Care Quality Commission. Discussion then focused on costs which had approximately doubled since the original quotation received from the Authority's contractor (Entrust) in 2019. In response, the Cabinet Member undertook to obtain clarification from the company, seek further scrutiny by the appropriate Committee, as necessary and inform them of the outcome, in due course.

A Member spoke of the need to ensure Horninglow Bungalow's 'Good' CQC rating was not adversely affected by either the Cabinet's 2019 decisions or the current review. In response the Cabinet Member re-assured the Committee over the Authority's rigorous selection processes to identify an independent provider and went on to explain the decision in the context of the Authority's strategic approach to the residential Care market in the County.

With regard to residential replacement care services (directly provided), the Chairman sought an indication of the arrangements the Authority had in place to ensure resilience in the event of high staff sickness absence rates and specifically whether Nexxus Care Limited (the County Council owned care provider) were included. Also, he spoke of the opportunities presented by the pandemic in terms of new ways of working and recruiting staff from sectors of the economy which had experienced downturns. In reply the Cabinet Member emphasised the importance with which Authority took to ensuring premises were Covid secure and that staff were safe and outlined the measures which they had implemented. He acknowledged a potential role for Nexxus together with the benefits various new ways of working could make in attractive new staff.

In response to a request from a Member, the Cabinet Member outlined the consultation arrangements undertaken by the Authority in 2019 in respect of the relocation of residential replacement care to Wilmot Drive, Newcastle-under-Lyme.

A Member cited a serious shortage of specialist day care opportunities for adults in their area. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged shortcomings in current provision citing the Pandemic as the principle reason for progress on the County Council's re-commissioning programme having been delayed. He went on to highlight that five out of the six premises in the County which delivered these services had been made Covid safe. However, there was reduced capacity owing to the need for social distancing measures to be observed. It was hoped that further progress would be made on commissioning new services as soon as possible which would, in turn, stimulate the market. The Authority hoped to have a better indication of the services available for commissioning in early 2021.

An observer from Healthwatch informed them of a report his organisation had produced following inspections of independent sector day care facilities in the County (which weren't regulated by the CQC) during 2019. Various activities had been available with feedback from service users being generally positive and he undertook to circulate copies of the report to Members for information.

In conclusion, the Chairman summarised the views of the Committee stating that whilst they supported the changes to Learning Disability Services Directly Provided by the Authority outlined in the report they recommended that further clarification of the increased costs of developing the Scotch Orchard and Wilmot Drive sites be sought from Entrust and; the efforts of staff to maintain service delivery during the Covid-19 pandemic were acknowledged. In addition, he requested that the Committee be provided with a better indication of the timescales involved in completing the changes set out and; confirmation that the Care Quality Commission had given their support to the dual use of both sites for Residential Replacement and Specialist Day Care Opportunities.

He thanked the Cabinet Member for his attendance, an interesting and informative presentation and the opportunity to give meaningful scrutiny to the work of the Authority for the benefit of residents of the County.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be received and noted.

(b) That clarification of the increase in capital costs (as set out in the report) associated with developing the Scotch Orchard, Lichfield and Wilmot Drive, Newcastle under Lyme sites by the County Council into directly provided residential care facilities be provided to the Committee.

(c) That an indication of the timescales envisaged by the County Council for developing the above-mentioned sites be provided to the Committee.

(d) That confirmation of the Care Quality Commission's approval to the registration of new residential care facilities at the above-mentioned sites be provided to the Committee.

34. Covid-19 - Changes to Service Delivery

The Committee considered a report and presentation of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCGs) Accountable Officer (schedule 2 to the signed minutes) updating them on the progress and priorities of Health and Care Partners to restore and recover services following the first surge of the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic.

Jenny Fullard (Communications and Engagement Service Partner) and Jane Moore (Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance), Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent CCGs were present at the meeting.

Since the outbreak of the Pandemic in March 2020 all health and care services had had to adapt to enable a greater focus on priorities and ensure compliance with social distancing measures. Consequently, many routine NHS services had been temporarily paused/changed in order that workforce and resources could be re-deployed towards fighting the effects of the virus. However, as cases had decreased over the Summer, Partners had worked to restore routine services. In July 2020 NHS England and Improvement (NHSE&I) published their Phase Three Letter which included various ambitious targets for the restoration of routine services, including endoscopy, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans and primary care by Autumn 2020.

The vast majority of services had now either been restored or were in the process of restoration. However, some temporary changes previously implemented would need to continue during the second surge of the virus. Currently Partners were balancing both routine and Covid-19 care and detailed modelling was being undertaken to help plan future demand. In addition, the Pandemic had accelerated various areas of transformation included in the national Long-Term Plan (published in 2019). In a relatively short period of time, areas such as digital technology and integration had advanced significantly and Health were keen to explore how these innovations could be retained in the future.

During their presentation of the report, the representatives of Health highlighted:- (i) the impact of Covid-19 on services in Staffordshire; (ii) the various measures which had been implemented to keep patients safe; (iii) the Restoration and Recovery (System) Plan submitted to NHS England on 21 September 2019; (iv) the Priorities outlined in the Plan; (v) the current status with regard to implementation of the Plan; (vi) the key risks and challenges involved; (vii) the temporary service changes implemented; (viii) the various locally driven changes; (ix) the Phase 1 - Critical Tests to exclude non-viable long-term solutions; (x) the Phase 2 – Service Changes Impact Appraisal; (xi) the Communications and Engagement activity undertaken; (xii) emerging patient feedback; (xiii) the Phase 3 – System Engagement and Alignment work undertaken; (xiv) next steps in the restoration and recovery process and; (xv) further information on the restoration of specific services, details of which were included in the slides circulated to Members with the Agenda for the meeting.

In the full and wide-ranging discussion which ensued, Members gave careful scrutiny to the report, asked questions and held the CCGs to account.

In response to a question from a Member regarding mental health services, the Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance spoke of the arrangements in place to support service users in this group during the crisis including roll-out of the flu vaccine. In response to another question regarding re-introduction of maternity services at Stafford hospital, the Director said that patient safety and continuity of services across the Trust were priority considerations at present. However, long term service provision at the site was being considered as part of the Restoration and Recovery Plan.

Other Members sought clarification of the long-term future of various services in their areas including:- (i) Samuel Johnson Hospital, Lichfield's Maternity Unit which was currently closed owing to the Pandemic; (ii) Leek Moorlands Hospital's Minor Injury Unit which had been closed in March 2020 owing to severe staffing shortages and low levels of attendance at the unit; (iii) breast screening services in north Staffordshire and; (iv) 24 hour Accident and Emergency (A&E) services at County Hospital, Stafford. In reply the Director said that she was unaware of any current proposals by University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust to substantially reconfigure services at Samuel Johnson Hospital. The MRU at Leek had been closed owing to safety reasons but the views of local residents were being taken into consideration in the planning of pathways for Urgent Care. Whilst cancer screening services had previously been suspended, diagnostic services had now been fully restored. With regard to County Hospital, the aim was to ensure only those patients who required A&E services attended the Department with a greater focus on NHS 111 services, where appropriate.

A Member cited concerns regarding long waits for ophthalmology appointments. In reply the Director explained that appointments were being arranged on a clinical risk basis and their aim was to ensure patient flows were re-instated across all disciplines. However, specific problems would be investigated if further details were provided.

In response to concerns raised by Members regarding the availability of flu vaccinations, the Chairman requested the Scrutiny and Support Manager co-ordinate the receipt of any specific cases raised by them, for forwarding on to the CCGs, as necessary, by no later than Tuesday 27 October 2020.

With regard to cancer care, a Member relayed an example of poor service received by a constituent during the Pandemic. In reply, the Director acknowledged the consequences of the temporary service changes implemented and said that the effects of the acute phase of Covid-19 on cancer patients would probably become clearer during 2021. However, she asked Members for their assistance in helping to relay messages about the importance of patients continuing to access services, where necessary, to the wider community.

Following a comment by a Member regarding communication and engagement with the Committee, the Communications and Engagement Service Partner gave further details of the Stakeholder initiative which had been held in August 2020. The aim of the event had been to understand the challenges being faced by patients in accessing services etc. and had been attended by 70 participants including staff, patients and campaign groups from across the County. The Service Partner referred to the success of the event in providing the CCGs with feedback, the results of which would be shared with Members in due course. However, the Chairman went on to express his disappointment that elected Members had not been invited to attend and spoke of the importance of involving the Committee in future initiatives, where relevant, at an early stage.

A Member commented on the need for effective communication with residents and Patient Groups in their area which had a large Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population. Also, there was a need to differentiate between Type 1 and 2 diabetes in national and local advice in order to provide clarity and reduce unnecessary anxiety amongst sufferers. In response the Director undertook to obtain further guidance from clinicians on the issue of diabetes and refer back to the Committee in due course. With regard to residents from BME communities, the Service Partner outlined the steps they had taken to engage with these groups. However, she referred to the difficulties they often experienced in reaching certain sections of the community and would be grateful to receive suggestions as to how communication could be improved with those people who had previously been missed.

The observer from Healthwatch informed Members of a survey undertaken by a Patient Participation Groups in East Staffordshire which was to be considered by the local CCG at a meeting later that day.

A Member spoke in support of the Committee requesting benchmarking data from CCGs in order to make comparison between the frequency of face to face as opposed to virtual appointments, so that further scrutiny could be given where appropriate. Continuing he said that anecdotal information suggested that patients were experiencing difficulties in receiving face to face appointments. The Director commented that all patients should now be able to access face to face appointments with their General Practitioners, where necessary. However, the CCGs continued to monitor the situation and it was her understanding the current ratio was in the region of 60:40 in favour of virtual appointments.

The Chairman then thanked the Cabinet Member for his attendance, an interesting and informative presentation and the opportunity to give meaningful scrutiny to Health for the benefit of residents of the County.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report/presentation be received and noted.

(b) That the restoration and recovery of services by Health following the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic be kept under review by the Committee and further scrutiny be undertaken at the appropriate time.

(c) That Members notify the Scrutiny and Support Manager of problems relating to the availability of flu vaccinations in their areas by no later than Tuesday 27 October 2020, for forwarding to Clinical Commissioning Groups, as necessary.

35. District/Borough Healthy Scrutiny Activity

The Committee considered a report of the Scrutiny and Support Manager (schedule 3 to the signed minutes) giving a summary of the health scrutiny activity which had been undertaken by Staffordshire District and Borough Council's under the standing joint working arrangements, since their previous meeting.

With regard to South Staffordshire District Council's Wellbeing Select Committee a Member informed them that that the meeting on 16 October 2020 had been attended by representatives of three local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) at which they referred to possible delays in implementing the extended flu vaccination programme later in the year owing to a shortage of supplies.

With regard to Lichfield District Council's Community Housing and Health (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee, a Member stressed the urgent need for clarity regarding the long term future/re-opening of the George Bryan Centre which had provided mental health services until a serious fire at the site during 2019. In reply the Scrutiny and Support Manager referred to an update given to the Committee shortly after the fire. However, further information regarding the Centre was being sort from the local CCG and would be circulated to Members as soon as possible.

RESOLVED – That the reports and further update set out above be received and noted.

36. Work Programme 2020/21

The Committee considered a rolling Work Programme for 2020/21 (schedule 4 to the signed minutes).

The Chairman highlighted the proposed additional meeting which had been included for a date and time to be arranged in December 2020 in order to consider the new Integrated System for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. He also proposed inclusion of "Workforce Planning" in the list of Suggested Items as a follow-up to Together We're Better's Workforce Strategy strand which had previously been scrutinised by the Committee.

In addition, the Chairman informed them that:- (i) work on compiling a Health Dashboard was progressing and would be brought to the Committee as soon as possible; (ii) he had recently met with representatives of Healthwatch Staffordshire for an information sharing session; (iii) he had recently received correspondence from local residents/groups regarding various NHS establishments which would be taken forward as appropriate and; (iv) copies of Quality Accounts he had received from Health Trusts would be circulated to Members in due course so that responses could be provided by the required deadlines.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be received and noted.

(b) That the updated Work Programme 2020/21 be approved with the addition of the above-mentioned changes.

37. Date of Next Meeting - Monday 30 November 2020 at 10.00 am, Virtual/on-line

RESOLVED – That the date, time and venue of the next meeting be noted.

Chairman