

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND OLDER PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE**  
**TUESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY, 2008 AT 3.30 P.M.**  
**IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK**

**PART 1**

PRESENT: Councillors

Beddows, J. (Chairman)  
 Easton, Mrs. D. M. (Vice-Chairman)

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| Ball, G.D.   | Davis, Mrs. M.A. |
| Davies, D.N. | Mitchell, C.     |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Also Present: Mrs. M. Darbyshire<br>Mrs. H. Heath<br>Mr. A. Derry<br>Mrs. V. Lloyd<br>Ms. H. Perren<br>Councillor Mrs. J.A. Johnson | Staffordshire County Council<br>Chase Tenants' and Residents' Federation<br>Chase Tenants' and Residents' Federation<br>Chase Tenants' and Residents' Federation<br>Mid Staffs General Hospitals NHS Trust<br>South Staffordshire Council |
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(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K.L. Bennett, Mrs. D. Grice, R.G. Meaden, G.N. Molineux and Ms. A. Ames, Patient and Public Involvement Forum and Mr. P. Smith, District Director of Social Care and Health (Staffs County Council/CCDC).

**53. Declaration of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members**

| <u>Member</u>     | <u>Nature of Interest</u>   | <u>Type</u>              |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Easton, Mrs. D.M. | Item 5 – Review of Private Sector Housing Renewal Pilot Programme - Agent for company who owns properties in the Brereton area. | Personal and Prejudicial |

**54. Minutes**

AGREED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January, 2008 be approved as a correct record.

**55. Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Dave Chaplin to the meeting to give a presentation on the Strategic Housing Service Improvement Plan.

A number of slides were shown which provided information on the following progress up to February 2008 for Strategic Housing.

- Strengthening the focus on customers
- Strengthening the Council's approach to diversity
- Strengthening the strategic approach to housing
- Making best use of existing housing
- Enabling the provision of more housing
- Strengthening improvement planning and performance management
- Strengthening capacity in the service

The Chairman referred to the completed/ongoing work in respect of Strengthening capacity in the service and the new arrangements with Spirita Care and Repair and indicated that there was a need for the DFG budget of £350K to be increased. He asked that the item be included on a future Agenda and representatives invited from the organisation.

A Member referred to privately owned properties that were left vacant for a number of years and asked what was within the Council's jurisdiction to locate the owners of the vacant properties. Mr. Chaplin indicated that the use of new Housing Act powers were available to the Council to use in an attempt to bring the properties back into use. However, the Council would try alternative ways such as talking with the local community to try and establish who the owners were before any enforcement action was taken. He also advised that there were approximately 80/90 properties that had remained empty over a number of years and approximately 400 empty properties due to other reasons.

AGREED:

That the Healthier Communities, Housing and Older People Select Committee consider the DFG budget in relation to Strategic Housing Service Improvement and an invite be extended to representatives of Spirita Care and Repair to attend a future meeting of the Select Committee.

**56. Review of Private Sector Housing Renewal Pilot Programme**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environmental Health (Enclosure 5.1 – 5.8 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

Councillor Mrs. M.A. Davis referred to enclosure 5.4 of the report and asked if there was any reason why the remaining owners did not want to participate in the full survey. Mr. Chaplin stated that there could be a number of reasons, or the owners may not wish to be asked questions in relation to their own property.

Councillor D.N. Davies referred to the Decent Homes Standard and asked how the Council would apportion help in relation to the privately owned properties and what

contribution would be made by landlords. Mr. Chaplin stated that there was some difficulty given that the estate in question was made up of mixed ownership; however he indicated that the Council would perhaps need to consider the use of grants and loans particularly in the private sector.

Councillor C. Mitchell raised concern that there were a number of estates in the District such as that of the Coalboard properties that were in a similar situation to those in Brereton. Furthermore, she stated that there could be some resentment from Council tenants with money being made available for private sector housing.

Mr. B. Phillips, Head of Planning and Regeneration reported that Council agreed to monies being used to tackle problems in the private housing sector. The monies would be used on the areas with properties requiring significant improvements to meet the Decent Homes Standard. He also reported that a programme currently existed for improvement work to be carried out on Council properties.

Councillor Mrs. J.A. Johnson referred to the report and stated that private properties in need of modernisation could be subject to a Health and Safety inspection in an attempt to bring the properties up to the Decent Homes Standard.

(Councillor Mrs. D.M. Easton having declared a personal and prejudicial interest left the meeting prior to consideration of the recommendation).

AGREED:

That the Healthier Communities, Housing and Older People Select Committee recommend that Cabinet consider the equality of any proposals that may be made in relation to monies used for improvements to owner occupied dwellings and privately rented dwellings

#### **57. Annual Healthcheck 2007/2008**

Mr. S. Shilvock, Head of Environmental Health circulated the Healthcare Commission's 'Your Part in the Annual Health Check 2007/2008' and reported that trusts would be compiling their declaration as part of the annual health check and therefore the Select Committee were required to provide comments at the next meeting. A response would then be submitted to the Healthcare Commission by 24 April 2008.

The Head of Environmental Health reported that comments from Members on each of the following organisations were required:

South Staffordshire PCT  
Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust  
Shropshire and Staffordshire Mental Health Trust  
West Midlands Ambulance Service

The Head of Environmental Health stated that he would provide Members with the comments that were circulated to the Healthcare Commission from last year.

AGREED:

That the comments formulated in response to the Annual Health Check in 2006/07 be circulated to all Members of the Committee

**58. South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust**

There was no update reported due to the absence of the representative from the South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust.

**59. Proposed Health Centre Development**

The Chairman agreed that the order of the Agenda be revised and the proposed health centre development update be given.

Mr. Griffiths, Locality Director, South Staffordshire PCT reported that the PCT would not be proceeding with the preferred option and having consulted on the option, the developer would not be considering it as the preferred site. It was also unlikely that a number of G.P. Practices would remain open if the health centre was developed with the preferred option in mind. He also stated that the health centre development would not be located in Cannock Hospital.

However, he reported that the PCT were considering an alternative site but Mr. Griffiths would be unable to provide details as previous discussions with G.P. practices and other service providers revealed that they would prefer an alternative location to the one suggested.

Mr. Griffiths stated however that commitment had been given to building a new health centre and the PCT were keen to see the health centre developed this year if possible. He also reported that searches in relation to the alternative site would hopefully be complete in the next few weeks

Due to the timescale involved with securing a site for development of the Health Centre, Members were keen to clarify that the reasons for turning down the preferred site were valid. Mr. Griffiths informed the Committee that the PCT Board would consider the comments of the Committee and were also mindful that if they pursued the previous option many G.P. Practices in the area risked closure given that they were independent practices. However, the PCT did have the power to set up an independent centre regardless of concerns raised by G.P.'s, he also indicated that this was not an option that the PCT wished to explore.

Councillor C. Mitchell raised concern that the idea to establish a health centre had been raised by a number of G.P.'s that were working out of old practices, and she would not be happy to see the PCT Board take the steps of potentially pursuing an independent health centre given the concerns of G.P.'s and service providers. Mr. Griffiths stated that the PCT were jointly working with the G.P.'s to deliver services for Cannock and was of the view that the previous option was deliverable but was very problematic.

Councillor C. Mitchell was of the opinion that G.P's would still have to relocate in a few years time given the current condition of the practices they worked from. Mr. Griffiths

stated that in his opinion most G.P.'s would choose to relocate to the health centre from their current practices and a number of practices would not be viable, furthermore this was a problem that many practices were facing throughout the country.

Councillor Mrs. M.A. Davis asked if the 5 G.P.'s were still keen to be relocated to a new health centre. Mr. Griffiths reported that the scheme was still viable and the only delay was that of identifying a site. He also confirmed that a training practice would be established when the health centre was developed.

## **60. Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust**

Ms. H. Perren, Head of Marketing and Business Development provided Members with a progress report.

She reported that with effect from 1 February 2008 Mid Staffs General Hospitals NHS Trust was now a Foundation Trust. Elections and appointments to the Council of Governors took place in 2007 and the first meeting of the Governors was held on 4 February 2008 with a public meeting scheduled for 31 May 2008 at 2.15 p.m.

Ms. Perren reported that a health related seminar was scheduled for 1 April 2008 at Cannock Chase Hospital which was open to all Members in relation to modern treatments for bone and joint disease.

She reported on the Campaign to Reduce Healthcare Associated Infection and indicated that there had been 2 cases of MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus) reported for February. She also provided information on the infections pre 48 hours and post 48 hours.

The Chairman enquired regarding previous discussions in relation to ward cleaning. Ms. Perren reported that a campaign was underway and a deep clean of the hospital was currently taking place. In terms of MRSA, procedures were being reviewed and a press release would be issued shortly to advise the public of current progress.

The Chairman asked if consideration had been given to potentially rotating patients between wards when cleaning was being carried out. Ms. Perren reported that there were no wards free where this could take place however an alternative option was being considered which included using bays within hospitals.

She reported that she would provide the Committee with target figures in relation to infections and also provide a comparison for the end of the year at the next meeting.

With regard to Cannock Chase Hospital, plans to relocate the existing services were currently being implemented and it was hoped that plans in relation to other moves would be signed off in March. The changing rooms work would commence on 17 March 2008 which would allow for the Breast Screening Unit and Wheelchair Services.

Ms. Perren indicated that work to the old dining room to convert to an office suite would be complete in 12 weeks following the commencement of works on 17 March 2008. Subway was currently offering a reduced service to staff, patients and visitors while they carried out work to the shop unit.

Mr. Griffiths indicated that the Trust and the PCT had signed a contract for activity, and this would be a legally binding contract rather than a Service Level Agreement. A joint press release would be issued by 28 February 2008 in relation to the negotiations and proposals for Littleton Ward at Cannock Chase Hospital. Littleton Ward would be used to provide support to patients as a basis for returning into the community.

**61. Staffordshire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Mrs. M.A. Davis the representative appointed to Staffordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee reported that the last meeting was held on 5 February, 2008.

G.P. Out of Hours Service

Councillor Mrs. M.A. Davis reported that information in respect of the takeover of the G.P. Out of Hours Service contract had not been made available and concern was raised that the contract was due to commence on 1 April 2008, and the public would be unaware of the new system. Members of the Committee were of the opinion that a letter should be forwarded to the PCT to enquire what information had been made available to the public in respect of the new contract.

Strategic Plans

Councillor Mrs. M.A. Davis reported on the County's Strategic Plans which included social care and health and children and young people. There were a number of targets which were required to be met and comments were required from County Members.

CAMS

It was reported that a new Chief Executive had been appointed to CAMS and a full review of the service had been carried out in order to ascertain the level of work required to modernise the service.

Work Programme

Councillor Mrs. M.A. Davis reported the following as part of the County's Work Programme:

Work to commence on Sexual Health

Work to commence in April – Respite/those with learning difficulties/obesity work

Maternity Services – although Mid Staffs General Hospitals NHS Trust were reported as being a good performer amongst maternity services, however Walsall Manor Hospital had been ranked as the best

AGREED:

That a letter be forwarded to the PCT to enquire what information has been made available to the public in respect of the new Out of Hours G.P. contract.

**62. Work Programme**

The Head of Environmental Health circulated a revised Work Programme and gave an update report.

AGREED:

- (A) That the Work Programme be noted
- (B) That the meeting scheduled for 26 March, 2008 commence at 3.30 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN