

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH, 2015, AT 4:00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Gamble, B. (Chairman)
Freeman, Miss. M. (Vice-Chairman)

Jones, R.
Preece, J.

Sutton, Mrs. H.M.

Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chairman agreed to change the order of the Agenda.

By Invitation: Dr. J. Odum and Mr. S. Mahmud, Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust.

Also present: Mrs. H. Parsons, Healthwatch, Staffordshire and Staffordshire County Councillor Mrs. C. Mitchell.

38. Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust

The Chairman welcomed Dr. Jonathan Odum and Mr. Sultan Mahmud to the meeting.

Sultan Mahmud discussed early service transfers which had taken place in January and February and advised that there had been no major problems. He indicated that the process was subject to rigorous tests and processes.

It was reported that the Obstetrics Service had ceased on 16 January, 2015 and had transferred from the County Hospital, Stafford to the Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust. The Trust had increased its capacity and allowed for additional beds.

He explained that with regard to Acute surgery there had been an increase in the number of beds to 37 and all Out Patients' Clinics were now provided at Cannock Chase Hospital. Trauma activity had ceased at the County Hospital, Stafford on 9 February, 2015 and had now transferred. He added that an additional 13 beds were available at Cannock and new theatres would be open towards the end of November.

Dr. Jonathan Odum indicated that there would be a number of changes in April regarding Acute medicine from the County Hospital, Stafford. He reported that two Cardio consultants would join Wolverhampton together with two Cardiologists which would strengthen their team. It also appeared that Acute medicine patients would not always be treated at the County Hospital, Stafford due to the lack of beds. Although already happening, the formal transfer and arrangements would take place in April.

With regard to Paediatrics it was reported that the in-patients service would cease on 18 May, 2015 and patients would be split between Wolverhampton and Royal Stoke University Hospital, although the service would be managed by Stoke. Community Paediatric services in the Cannock area and adult and adolescence services would continue and Wolverhampton were considering looking to extend the paediatric home service and looking for a discharge facility which would be supported by nursing in the area. Furthermore, there would be an increase of 21/2 community Paediatric nurses and recruitment was ongoing.

Dr. Odum reported that there would be a split with the Haematology department and the four consultants currently employed between Wolverhampton and Stoke and discussions were ongoing on how the service would operate in both Stafford and Cannock. With regard to Oncology services, these would be provided by Stoke and Wolverhampton and discussions were being had as to how the services could be provided in the long term.

He indicated that the new Endoscopy suite would be opening in April and the Rheumatology department in July and meetings would be held this week with GPs concerning anticoagulation issues.

He reported that the bus service between Wolverhampton and Cannock was now running and discussions were ongoing with the Council concerning the need for more car parking space.

Members were invited to ask questions.

Members expressed concern and referred to the Council's recent Community Forums where Members asked if leaflets could be placed in patients' appointment letters advising them of the new bus service between both hospitals. Furthermore, it appeared that information was not contained on the Trust's website.

Mr. Mahmud indicated that the Trust were not currently placing leaflets in patient appointment letters, however this would be carried out in the future and he would ensure the Trust's website was updated by the end of the week.

A Member was keen to know how staff morale was assessed, particularly in light of the recent changes.

Mr. Mahmud responded and talked about positive morale across the hospitals, although morale in the emergency department was 'patchy' which was due to staffing problems and pressures such as the winter period. He referred to the National Staff Survey and the internal staff survey which was undertaken and amongst other questions this asked for the views of staff. This information would be dissected and provided to Managers and more senior officers to act upon.

The Chairman referred to the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) at Cannock Chase Hospital and the decision made to reduce its hours, and asked if this was still in place.

Mr. Mahmud explained that the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had commissioned the hours of the MIU; however the Trust would continue to look at and provide opportunities for services.

A Member referred to the recent Cannock Community Forum where a discussion had been held concerning the MIU. She reported that the CCG would not be increasing the hours, although locally people felt that the hours should be extended.

Members also sought information regarding the recruitment of GPs to Cannock and information concerning haematology. Dr. Odum reported that it was hoped new GPs could be attracted to Cannock and also discussed the contractual arrangements concerning blood tests and which site they should arrive at for testing.

39. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. M.A. Davis, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader, A. F. Bernard and Mrs. S.M. Cartwright.

40. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members

No declarations of interests in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members Interests were made.

41. Minutes

The Head of Environmental Health referred to Minute 34. Cannock Chase CCG Financial Recovery Plan and reported that the Head of Finance had previously forwarded a list of questions to Mr. Simpson, Director of Finance at the CCG from the Committee. He reported that the response to the questions had only been received just prior to the meeting and he would therefore circulate to Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 January, 2015 be approved as a correct record.

42. Update on Staffordshire County Council's Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee

The Chairman reported that two meetings of the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee had been held and one Accountability Session.

He reported that at the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee held yesterday Members discussed independent futures, where a report would be submitted back to the Committee in 6 months time.

He also reported on a document entitled 'Transforming Cancer and End of Life Care' where there were some mixed reactions to the content. The document would be circulated to all Committee Members to read.

With regard to the Work Programme it was reported that North Staffordshire CCG would be invited to a future meeting to discuss the withdrawal of hearing aids for minor hearing difficulties.

43. Healthwatch Staffordshire – Update

Hester Parsons, Healthwatch reported that the Better Care Fund would be introduced from next year. The Fund was a single pooled budget for health and social care services to work more closely in local areas. Focus groups and discussions with local groups would commence starting in April and finish in June with three groups each month. The groups would be held across the 5 CCG areas and discussions would be held around cancer, mental health and assisted technology. Hester Parson would check the details and inform Members of the Committee.

She also indicated that a report would be made available towards the end of March concerning GP appointments. Information was currently being analysed with regard to the additional A&E survey which was undertaken at the Royal Stoke University Hospital.

Hester Parsons reported that staff at the Royal Stoke University Hospital would be discussing with parents the services currently offered by the Paediatric Assessment Unit at Stafford to gauge their views and opinions.

With regard to the Advocacy Service, this was now being provided through Healthwatch and leaflets would be forwarded to Members of the Committee shortly which provided information about the service.

A Member of the Committee expressed concern that various departments were being transferred from the County Hospital, Stafford to other hospitals and a service was still needed in Stafford to serve the community.

44. Work Programme

The Head of Environmental Health reported that the Work Programme was almost complete with the exception of 'Supporting People' which would be carried over to the next municipal year. He also indicated that an item concerning the withdrawal of hearing aids would also be included.

It was reported that there may be a need to hold an additional Health Scrutiny Committee to consider the accounts issued in April by the Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust.

CHAIRMAN

(The meeting concluded at 5.20 p.m.).