

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 21 APRIL 2009 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Mawle, D.L. (Chairman)
Yates, Ms. W. (Vice-Chairman)

Beddows, J.	Jones, R.
Bernard, J.D.	Morgan, C.W.J.
Bennett, Mrs. D.J.	Stretton, Mrs. P.Z.
Easton Mrs. D.M.	Thomas, D.
Holder, M.J.	

Also present: Councillor D.I. Dixon - Staffordshire County Council Co-opted Member

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I.R. Carr and C. Mitchell).

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

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
Beddows, J.	Minute 46 – Presentation on the Healthcare Commission Report into Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust - Member of Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust	Personal
Easton, Mrs. D.M.	Minute 46 – Presentation on the Healthcare Commission Report into Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust - Member of Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust	Personal
Stretton, Mrs. P.Z.	Minute 46 - Presentation on the Healthcare Commission Report into Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust – Member’s relative was admitted to Stafford Hospital	Personal

44. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2009 be approved as a correct

record.

45. Minutes of the Performance and Partnerships Scrutiny Sub Committee

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Performance and Partnerships Scrutiny Sub Committee held on 14 January and 11 February 2009 be noted.

46. Standards for Better Health Declaration 2008-09 (Annual Health Check)

Consideration was given to a briefing note of the Head of Environmental Health (Enclosure 6.1 – 6.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That due to the Committee's limited dealings with South Staffordshire NHS Trust, Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals Foundation Trust and West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust during the year, no response be made with regard to the performance of each of the Trusts.

47. Presentation – Healthcare Commission Report into Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust

The Committee received a presentation from Mr. Mike Gill, Deputy CEO of Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust who apologised that Mr. Eric Morton, Interim CEO, was unable to attend the meeting due to a prior appointment.

Members were advised that the report of the Healthcare Commission was published on 17 March 2009, a summary of which had been circulated with the agenda. Mr. Gill provided details of the high profile visits and reviews that had taken place since the publication of the report. These included visits by Mr. Alan Johnson, Secretary of State for Health and Dame Christine Beasley, Chief Nursing Officer, as well as an independent review of case notes and reviews by Professor Sir George Alberti and Dr. David Colin-Thome.

The presentation also outlined the proposed future actions of the Trust, which would include the development of an improvement plan to be presented to the regulator "Monitor" on 17 April 2009, the subsequent monitoring of the plan, together with a review of the Trust in six months time by the Care Quality Commission. Mr. Gill reported that he would be prepared to bring a further presentation to the Committee outlining the details of the improvement plan.

Members were provided with details of infection rates and mortality statistics, in addition to the proposed planned investments by the Trust during 2009/10.

In response to a number of questions from Members, Mr. Gill reported that Stafford Hospital was in the top 10% of cleanest hospitals in the country and that there had not been any cases of infection at Cannock hospital. It was also reported that the Trust uses bank and agency nurses to cover absences, although the Trust endeavour to use

bank staff wherever possible so as to reduce costs.

Councillor Mrs. Stretton referred to a personal case of her sister, who had recently been admitted to Stafford Hospital and was of the opinion that improvements had not been made. Mr. Gill informed Mrs. Stretton that should she wish to provide him with details of her specific case, he would look into it further and accepted that whilst improvement still needed to be made, an improvement programme had been prepared which would take between 12-18 months to implement. He also added that £750,000 had been invested in staff and equipment in Stafford Hospital's Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department in order to reduce the waiting times for patients.

Members sought clarification with regard to the medical expertise of the reception staff within the A&E Department, and in particular the way in which patients were prioritised. Mr. Gill advised that the role of the reception staff was to acquire information from the patient in relation to their presenting conditions and this information was then provided to a Doctor who assessed the information and prioritised the cases accordingly. Members were also advised that the Trust had recently introduced a GP service to run alongside the A&E Department to deal with non emergency cases.

With regard to the layout of Stafford Hospital, and of the wards in particular, it was reported that the Trust had appointed health care planners to redesign the layout of the hospital in order to better meet the needs of the Trust and patients. This was a four year programme and was anticipated to cost between £17-18m.

Members enquired whether the Trust had experienced difficulties in recruiting staff following the publication of the report. Mr. Gill advised that a number of individuals had withdrawn from positions offered to them following the publication of the report, although this figure was not significant. He also added that there was a national shortage of nurses, although the Trust had recently agreed a contract with Keele University for undergraduate students to undertake work experience with the Trust.

Mr. Gill also informed Members that in 2006/07 £10m of funding had been withdrawn from the Trust's improvement plan and the report of the Health Commission had indicated that this was a contributing factor to the problems which had been experienced. The Trust's Board had relied on third party evidence, including that from the Healthcare Commission, which had shown improvement. In 2007/08 the Trust obtained Level 3 for litigation assessment but both staff and patient surveys had indicated that improvements were not being made.

Members sought clarification with regard to whether any of the previous board members remained members and how the Trust received foundation status given the performance of the hospitals.

Mr. Gill explained that since 2006/07 none of the previous board members remained on the board and that 8 out of 11 board members had changed in the last 12 months. With regard to foundation trust status, Monitor considers the financial and governance arrangements in order to determine whether a board should gain foundation trust status and on the basis that the Trust's reports were positive the Trust received foundation status.

Mr. Gill also added that the Trust were not complacent and that it was a journey to improve its performance. Following visits to by the Healthcare Commission between May 2008 and February 2009, the Trust had shown improvement although Mr. Gill accepted that there was some way to go in order to regain the trust of the community.

Finally, Mr. Gill stated that the Healthcare Commission had provided the Trust with three previous versions of the report, prior to its publication. Each time the Trust had responded with a number of inaccuracies. He was of the opinion that the report did not show accurately the chronology of events and had it done so it would have demonstrated that the Trust had made improvements.

The Committee thanked Mr. Gill for attend the meeting and providing Members with the presentation.

RESOLVED:

That details of the Trust's improvement plan, which was to be presented to the regulator Monitor, be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

48. Health Scrutiny Update

The Committee received a presentation from Councillor Mrs. W. Yates, the Council's representative on Staffordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee.

In summary, the presentation provided Members with the details of recent meetings of Staffordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee and in particular the meeting held in response to the report of the Healthcare Commission into Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust. Members were shown footage of the webcast of the County Council's Health Scrutiny meeting.

The presentation also referred to two independent reviews which had been commissioned by the Secretary of State for Health; the first by Professor Sir George Alberti and the second by Dr. David Colin-Thome, National Director of Primary Care of PCT.

The Chairman referred to the recent calls in the press for a public local inquiry into the running of the Trust and considered that the Scrutiny Committee should determine whether it wished to support such calls or not.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's support for a public local inquiry into the running of Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust be deferred until the outcome of the independent reviews commissioned by the Secretary of State for Health was known.

49. Car Parking at Stafford and Cannock Hospitals

Consideration was given to a report of Mr. David Perry, Facilities and Support Services Manager at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust (Enclosure 7.1 – 7.2 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

50. Establishment of a Health Scrutiny Working Group

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Executive (Enclosure 8.1 – 8.7 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

It was reported that the recommendation contained within paragraph 2.3 of the report was to be deleted.

Following consideration of the report, Members were of the opinion that paragraph 4.2 of the Terms of Reference of the Working Group (Annex 1 of the report) should be amended in order that the representative from Staffordshire County Council could vote at meetings of the Working Group.

RESOLVED:

- (A) That approval be given to the establishment of a working group to assist the Scrutiny Committee with undertaking the health scrutiny function, with effect from the 2009/10 Municipal Year.
- (B) That the terms of reference for the working group, as set out at Annex 1 of the report, be approved subject to the amendment of paragraph 4.2 in order that the representative from Staffordshire County Council can vote at meetings of the Working Group.

51. Review of Publicity Arrangements – Community Forums

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Executive (Enclosure 9.1 – 9.10 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

- (A) That the review undertaken into the publicity arrangements for Community Forums, together with the options for raising awareness within the community and encouraging greater public involvement, be noted.
- (B) That it be noted that the Council's Corporate Priority Delivery Plan includes:
 - (i) A commitment to undertake a detailed review of the Council's current arrangements that encourage and promote community engagement; and
 - (ii) The development of a community engagement strategy, which includes viable options that encourage and promote effective community consultation, involvement and engagement.

52. Cost Effective Methods of Consulting with the Public

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Executive (Enclosure 10.1 – 10.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That consideration of the report be deferred to the first meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in the 2009/10 Municipal Year.

CHAIRMAN