

SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ninety-ninth Meeting held in Quaker Buildings on Tuesday 19 June 2001 at 6.30 pm

- 99/1 PRESENT:** Mrs Fionnuala Cook, Chairwoman
Mrs June Allister
Mrs Joan Baird
Mr Pat Brannigan
Mrs Margaret Campbell
Mr Robert Cummings
Mr Brendan Curran
Mrs Angela Gray
Mr Isaac Hanna
Mr Joseph Loughran
Mrs Mary McNally
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr Seamus Magee, Chief Officer
Mrs Nancy Downard, Office Manager
- APOLOGIES:** Mr Jim Cavanagh
Mrs Sue Cunningham
Mrs Roisin Foster

Mrs Baird, on behalf of the Council, expressed sympathy to the Chairwoman on the death of her mother-in-law, to Mr David Cook on the death of his mother and to all the Cook family.

Mrs Cook thanked Mrs Baird and the Council for their kind thoughts and said she would pass these on to the family.

99/2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed subject to an amendment to the third paragraph of item 98/13. This should read, *"The Chairwoman said she understood that the Director had been suspended in connection with an ongoing investigation into the adoption and death of one Romanian child and injury to the other"*.

99/3 MATTERS ARISING

1 98.6 Royal Group of Hospitals - Update on developments

Mr Loughran said he had difficulty hearing the presentation made by Mr McKee, Chief Executive of the Royal Group of Hospitals. He suggested that a microphone be made available for speakers at meetings. It was agreed that staff would address this matter.

2 98/4.6 Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust

Mrs Baird expressed a number of concerns about Craigavon Area Hospital. She referred, in particular, to the lack of accommodation in the A & E department where, on occasions, large numbers of patients were kept on trolleys for many hours because of a shortage of beds. Trolleys were often in corridors and patients had little privacy. Another area of concern regarded the employment of nurses. Mrs Baird said approximately £600,000 had been spent last year on agency nurses and she felt this should be channelled into the full time employment of young nurses. She also raised concern about the large sums of money being paid to consultants as distinction awards. She said it was difficult for the public to understand why the Trust still had serious financial problems when additional resources had been made available.

Mr Curran joined the meeting at 7.00 pm.

The Chairwoman said there was unlikely to be any real improvement in the situation at Craigavon Area Hospital because of the Trust's deficit. In her opinion the only way to make savings was to reduce services or not replace staff. She said the Trust was working with the Board and the Department on developing a recovery plan to meet a substantial shortfall in funding. In respect of accommodation she said there was a proposal from the Department for a prefabricated building but this would be a temporary measure. Mrs Baird raised concerns about 'temporary' solutions as they had a tendency to become long term. Mrs McNally said it was her view that there were too many managers and administrators and this needed to be addressed. Mrs Baird requested that the Trust's Chief Executive be asked to clarify the situation at Craigavon Area Hospital and address the Council's

concerns. It was agreed to provide Mrs Baird with the results of 'casualty watch' exercise from Monday 18 June.

99/4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

1 Extension period for Members

The Chairwoman referred members to a letter from the Department confirming an extension to the appointments of Mrs Allister, Mrs Campbell, Mr Cummings, Mrs Gray, Mr Loughran and herself for six months ending 30 November 2001.

2 Local Council Elections

The Chairwoman congratulated all Councillors who were re-elected to office. She paid tribute to the three Councillors who were not re-elected and wished them well in the future. It was agreed the Chairwoman would write to each of the Councillors thanking them for their contribution and commitment to the work of the Council.

3 Closure of Ward 5 Dermatology - Lurgan Hospital

The Chairwoman made reference to a letter from Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust advising of the closure of the Dermatology Ward at Lurgan Hospital from 6 July to 23 July. It was noted that emergency admissions would be accommodated in Ward 1 South, Craigavon Area Hospital.

4 Child and Family Care Services - Craigavon

The Chairwoman drew members attention to a letter from Mr Gowdy, Permanent Secretary responding to the Council's letter of 18 May regarding child and family care services in Craigavon. She also read a letter from Mr D Preston, Chief Executive of Craigavon and Banbridge Community Trust assuring the Council that Child and Family Care Services were being maintained in the absence of the Director.

The Chief Officer said he understood that the Director had been reinstated and would re-commence employment in the near future.

Mrs Baird said she hoped the matter would be fully investigated and that there would be no cover up. It was agreed to keep members updated on the situation.

5 Royal Group of Hospitals - Public Meeting

The Chairwoman advised members that the Royal Hospital's Group Trust was holding its monthly meeting in the Rokeby Room, Palace Stables, Armagh on 5 July. As she was unable to attend she asked if anyone else would be interested in attending. Mr Brannigan expressed an interest and agreed to confirm at a later date.

6 Planning Day for Elderly Services in the Southern Board's Area.

The Chairwoman reminded members of the Council's Planning Day for Elderly Services in the Southern Board's area. She said the event would take place in the Market Place Theatre, Armagh on Monday 2 July from 9.30 am to 4.00 pm and all members were invited to attend. Members were also asked to encourage other groups or individuals to attend. The Chief Officer said a report would be prepared by Professor McCormack and made available at a later date.

Mrs McNally and Mr Loughran left the meeting at 7.45 pm.

**99/5 INVESTING FOR HEALTH - (a) H&SS Council's Response
(b) VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC SHSSC 2001/25**

The Chairwoman invited the Chief Officer to present paper SHSSC 2001/25

The Chief Officer referred members to the four Health and Social Services Councils' response to 'Investing for Health' and to the accompanying report 'Investing for Health - The Public's View' detailing the results of a survey commissioned by the Councils to find out the views of the public on some of the key issues relating to the proposed public health strategy.

Mr Cummings congratulated the Councils on the report although he did not agree with all the suggestions for cross-cutting themes such as the replacement of the 11+.

In relation to the document 'The Views of the Public', the Chairwoman said this was a very good document. Mr Curran said mental health was the biggest single issue on the doorstep. He said it affected many school children and the lack of facilities was a major factor.

The Chairwoman said a child with mental health problems until recently had to wait months for an assessment but the recent appointment of a child psychiatrist had improved the situation.

Both papers were noted.

**99/6 SHSSC - TARGETING SOCIAL NEED - Outcome of Consultation
Process and Action Plan SHSSC 2001/26**

The Chairwoman invited the Chief Officer to present SHSSC 2001/26.

He reported on the outcome of the consultation on the Council's New Targeting Social Need Action Plan, which ended on 27 April 2001. Altogether, 445 groups and organisations were sent a copy of the draft Action Plan and comments were requested on the targets and timescales identified in the document. Sixteen organisations responded to the draft Action Plan, copies of which were available from the Council. Most of the comments endorsed the Council's draft Action Plan and supported the approach by the Council and Board. Comments were incorporated into the final plan.

In response to the Chairwoman's question about the uptake in relation to the complaints outreach in Newry and Dungannon, the Chief Officer said this would be reviewed after 3 months. Mr Cummings said the view had been expressed that a similar service should also be available in the Armagh area. Mr Brannigan said the Dobbin Street Clinic was being planned as a new facility to accommodate groups such as CAB and the Confederation of Community Groups. He suggested that the Council should liaise with the Director of the Confederation of Community Groups with a view to operating a similar service from the Dobbin Street clinic. The Chief Officer said this matter would be addressed following an evaluation of the outreach in Newry and Dungannon.

Mr Curran asked that members be kept informed of conferences and training days. The Chief Officer informed members that it was the Council's intention to re-register members' interests when the Council meetings commenced again in September.

It was agreed to forward the Final Action Plan to the Department.

99/7 JOINT BOARD AND TRUSTS - FIRST DRAFT EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - Temporary Service Transfers from South Tyrone Hospital SHSSC 2001/27

The Chief Officer referred members to the Draft Equality Impact Assessment on the Temporary Transfer of Services from South Tyrone Hospital which had been issued as a consultative document. However, following the Board meeting on Thursday 12 June the Board agreed to make a number of amendments and to extend the consultation period until 21 September. Members were invited to discuss the document.

The Chairwoman said the document was not well written and made some very sweeping statements. She made reference to the paragraph relating to the distribution of men and women across the travel bands. She also referred to a paragraph in relation to the proportion of patients who could have gone to Mid-Ulster, Tyrone County or Antrim Area Hospital and asked how the Board could have made this judgement. Mrs Baird referred to page 18 which showed breakdown by religion and said all were patients irrespective of religion and this should not have been included.

It was agreed to prepare a response to the document and also express the Council's concern at the quality of the document.

99/8 WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE SHSSC 2001/28

The Chief Officer provided members with an update on the 2001/02 work programme which had been agreed at the joint Council /Board meeting in March.

He outlined the current position in relation to the projects which included, patients' views on the quality of care provided in the elderly care and rehabilitation wards of Daisy Hill Hospital; patients' views of

services at Mullinure Day Hospital; Investing for Health - The Views of the Public; Patient satisfaction - analysis of the Clanrye Surgery in Newry; Follow-up meetings to the Locality Needs Assessment - Armagh Primary Care Commissioning Pilot; Children as Complainants, and users' views of the Prosthetics Service.

He reported that other projects which would be progressed over the coming months including; Identification of the reasons for non-attendance at health and social services appointments; Uptake rates of breast screening in the Newry and Mourne area; Users and carers experiences of Mental Health Services; The experiences and aspirations of children in care and the public's views on representing their interests in health and social care matters.

Mr Cummings said the Council was undertaking a very comprehensive work programme. He asked if it would be possible to get a copy of the Clanrye report. It was agreed to check this with the Research Officer although permission would have to be sought from the surgery.

In reply to Mr Cummings question about wheelchairs, the Chief Officer said that he had been assured that all the recommendations contained in the Council's report had been addressed. He said a lot of work had gone into addressing the issues. He suggested inviting Cynthia Cranston, Occupational Therapy Manager to a future meeting. Mrs Gray asked if the Complaints Officer would check on the availability of wheelchairs. The Chief Officer said the 'Priorities for Action' indicated that 100 extra motorised wheelchairs would be provided this year.

Mr Curran said a large proportion of the public was unaware of the Council's existence. The Chairwoman asked members to help raise awareness of the Council through their own contacts and the outreach facilities available in Newry and Dungannon.

Mr Cummings thanked the Council for its involvement in the Armagh Locality Needs Assessment which provided very useful and positive feedback.

99/9 COMMUNITY CARE REVIEW

SHSSC 2001/29

The Chairwoman invited the Chief Officer to present paper SHSSC 2001/29.

The Chief Officer informed members that Mr Brian Coulter, Chairman of the Eastern Health and Social Services Council had been asked to chair a review of community care. The documentation outlined the Terms of Reference and the process agreed to take the review forward. He said the review was important and the Council would need to put forward its views on the problems encountered by those in receipt of services and those on waiting lists for services. Comments were due by the closing date of 30 September.

Concern was expressed at how the review was being conducted and that it appeared to be an internal DHSSPS review and lacked independence. The terms of reference were also restricted and the view was expressed that the review appeared cosmetic. Members asked that the review be given the same status as the Acute Hospitals Review and the public be widely consulted. Concern was also expressed about the time frame set for the review. It was agreed to raise the Council's concerns with the DHSSPS.

99/10 THE INVESTIGATION INTO RETAINED ORGANS SHSSC 2001/30 Report from the Chief Medical Officer

The Chief Officer referred members to the report entitled 'The Investigation into Retained Organs' prepared by Dr H Campbell, the Chief Medical Officer. He said the report contained information which had previously been made public by the Minister to the Assembly in March 2001. The information was provided by Trusts in order to see how many organs had been retained. He said the information in the report had been made available to the Human Organs Inquiry and the Relatives Reference Group.

In relation to miscarriages, Mr Curran asked if there had been any retention of fetuses. He said this was a very traumatic experience for some women who may have had as many as 3 - 4 miscarriages. He also asked why Daisy Hill Hospital was not included in the Appendix 2 of the document.

It was agreed to write to the Organs Inquiry Group and request the information for Craigavon and Daisy Hill Hospitals.

99/11 SHSSC - EQUALITY SCHEME

SHSSC 2001/31

The Chief Officer reported that the Council's equality scheme had been approved by the Equality Commission on 14 June. He said the scheme would now be used as a working document and members would be kept updated on developments.

Mr Cummings expressed concern about the work load on the Council with no extra resources. The Chief Officer said each Council was to receive £6,000 to help with equality initiatives etc. He advised members about the Equality Assurance Unit and said links with the Unit could be very beneficial to the Council. It was agreed to request that the issue of resources be kept under review by the Department on the basis of the amount of work involved.

99/12 TRUSTS' BUSINESS

SHSSC 2001/32

1 Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 4 April and agenda for meeting on 6 June 2001.

2 Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 20 March and agenda for meeting on 15 May 2001.

3 Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 30 April and agenda for meeting on 4 June 2001.

99/13 FOR INFORMATION

- 1 SHSSB - Minutes of Meeting held on 8 May 2001
- 2 SHSSB - Adult Services Directory

99/14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 1 **Meeting with the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety**

The Chairwoman reported that the four Councils' Chairmen and Chief Officers had met with the Minister on 31 May 2001. The meeting was very constructive and useful. The availability of a new drug for arthritis was discussed but the Minister could not give assurances as to how long it would be before it would be available for all patients throughout Northern Ireland.

2 Armagh Community Hospital

Mr Brannigan expressed concern about the Community Hospital in Armagh being without a doctor on a number of occasions recently. He had raised the matter with the Trust and agreed to keep the Council informed of any difficulties encountered.

3 Out of Hours Survey Newry and Moy

Mrs Baird requested that the Council write to the Board and ask what the situation was regarding the final report on the survey conducted into the out of hours service in Newry and Moy. She said she had been informed it was with the printers but this was some time ago.

4 Carers' Experience of Hospital Discharge

Mrs Allister said a new piece of research had been conducted into carers' experiences of hospital discharge and a number of carers in Northern Ireland had an input into it. She agreed to provide the Council with a copy of the report.

99/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 18 September at 10.00 am in Quaker Buildings

Signed: _____

Date: _____