

SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of the One hundred and Second Meeting held in Quaker Buildings on Tuesday 20 November 2001 at 10.00 am

- 102/1 PRESENT:**
- Mrs Fionnuala Cook, Chairwoman
 - Mr Sydney Anderson
 - Mr Pat Brannigan
 - Mrs Lynne Cairns
 - Mrs Margaret Campbell
 - Mr Jim Cavanagh
 - Mr Robert Cummings
 - Mrs Patricia Ferris
 - Mrs Roisin Foster
 - Mrs Angela Gray
 - Mrs Nazy Harris
 - Mr Joseph Loughran
 - Mr Adrian McKinney
 - Mrs Yvonne McKnight
 - Mrs Mary McNally
 - Mr Charlie Rollston
 - Mr David Simpson
- IN ATTENDANCE:**
- Miss Karen McCoy, Research Officer
 - Miss Colette Hart, Complaints Officer
 - Mr Eddie Ritson, Director of Primary Care, SHSSB (for part of the meeting)
- APOLOGIES:**
- Mrs June Allister
 - Mrs Sue Cunningham
 - Mr Brendan Curran
 - Mr John Coulter
 - Mr John McArdle

The Chairwoman informed members of the death of Mrs Downard's father. The Chairwoman and members expressed sympathy.

The Chairwoman advised members that a new Chief Officer, Mrs Delia Van der Lenden, had been appointed and would take up post on 11 February 2002.

102/2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the previous meeting, which were circulated, were agreed and signed.

102/3 MATTERS ARISING

1 101/5 Winter Pressures

Mr Cummings referred to the minutes of the last Board meeting and asked about funding for winter pressures.

The Chairwoman informed members that there was no clarity on the matter yet. However, it was agreed that the Chairwoman would write to the Minister urging that specific funds were made available for winter pressures at the Craigavon Area Hospital.

2 101/4.6 Green Park HSS Trust – Attendance at Trust Board Meetings

The Chairwoman drew attention to the poster giving details of the next meetings at Green Park HSS Trust. She advised that representatives from all four Councils could attend and would have speaking rights. Mrs Ferris agreed to attend the next meeting on Monday 26 November 2001.

3 101/4.6 Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust – Speaking rights at Trust Board meetings

Mr Loughran asked if there had been any progress on speaking rights at Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust's Board meetings.

The Chairwoman advised that she and Mr Magee had met with the Trust and that they felt it was extremely important to have speaking rights. She told members, however, that she had just learned that the November Trust Board meeting had been replaced by a workshop. She asked that it be noted that the Council was disappointed that it had not heard from the Trust about speaking rights, and that it had not been informed that there would be a workshop this month instead of a full Trust Board meeting.

The Chairwoman commented that there had been a pattern of under-investment in the hospital but the Trust had to face up to its public responsibilities and must provide speaking rights. She urged the Council to continue to pursue the matter with the Chief Executive. She suggested that members draw up a rota for attendance at meetings.

4 101/4.5 Representation on Local Diabetic Services Advisory Group

The Chairwoman advised that a member of staff had spoken to Dr Farrell about Mrs Gray's nomination. She explained that the group would like a current Council member as it does have a user. It was agreed to leave the matter until the next Council meeting, and if no one volunteered Mrs Gray's nomination could be looked at again.

5 101/4.2 Quality of Care Provided in Hospitals – University of Ulster Focus Groups

Mr Cummings made the point that none of the members had been called to take part and was concerned that the focus groups would not take place before some members finished their term of office at the end of November.

The Chairwoman indicated that the Council's research officer, Miss McCoy, was liaising with the project. Miss McCoy explained that names had been forwarded but that the researchers were not looking for Council members specifically. She indicated that it was hoped the focus groups would take place before Christmas.

6 101/3.1 Craigavon Area Hospital – Pain Clinic

Mr Simpson asked if there had been any more developments in relation to the pain clinic since Dr McClean's departure. The Chairwoman advised that there was no further information. It was agreed that she would write to the Trust to clarify the position.

7 101/3.2 Orthopaedics

The Chairwoman advised that she had written to the Royal Group of Hospitals Trust about concerns that young people were jumping the queue for sports injuries treatment.

102/4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

1 Appointments to the Southern Health and Social Services Council

The Chairwoman welcomed the appointment of 10 new members to the Council. In particular, she welcomed Mrs P Ferris, Mrs L Cairns, Mrs Y McKnight, Mrs N Harris, Mr J Coulter and Mr A McKinney who were appointed from November 2001. Those who were appointed to join the Council in December include, Ms I Clarke, Mr B Montague, Mr C Henning and Mr P Murray.

She said that when all the new members took up post there would be a total of 15 new members. She explained that it was hoped to offer some induction or training starting in December – members would be contacted about whether they would like a full days training or two half days. She suggested that if it was felt this was not enough, further training could be arranged by the new Chief Officer or Chair.

2 Invitation to view the 'Macmillan Building' – the New Cancer Services Facility at Craigavon Area Hospital

It was agreed that the Chairwoman and Mrs Harris would attend .

10.25am Mrs McNally joined the meeting.

3 Consultation on Acute Treatment Services for Mental Health

The Chairwoman informed members of an invitation from the Southern Health and Social Services Board to attend a workshop on 27 November in the Palace Stables, Armagh.

The Chairwoman advised that the Council had had concerns about how the SHSSB intended to consult with users and carers.

The aim of the workshop was to move away from professional input and allow users and carers to give their views. She asked if any member with an interest in mental health issues would like to take part.

It was agreed that Mr McKinney would attend. The relevant papers would be forwarded to him.

4 UKCC Annual Lecture and Dinner in Northern Ireland

It was agreed that Mrs Cairns would attend the lecture on Tuesday 4 December 2001 on behalf of the Council.

5 Official Launch of Relatives' Association

An invitation had been received to the launch of the Relatives' Association Northern Ireland. The Chairwoman indicated that the Council's complaints officer would be attending. The matter was left for members' consideration and anyone interested should notify the office.

10.30am Mrs Foster joined the meeting

6 Southern Area Audit Steering Group

The Chairwoman advised that she had sat on this group. She explained that the group's discussions were confidential and could not be fed back to the Council but her participation had added to her knowledge and informed her work. She advised that it was the only multi-professional audit group in Northern Ireland with consumer representation and suggested that continued Council involvement was important. The matter was left for members to consider at the December Council meeting.

7 Nightingale Lodge – Respite Facility for Adults with Learning Disabilities

Concern was expressed about a lack of funding for respite beds for adults with learning disabilities. The Chairwoman stated that she had written to Mrs Rosaleen Moore at Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust seeking to clarify the position.

Mrs McNally indicated that she represented the Council on the Craigavon Health Forum. She explained that 3 beds had been closed at Edenvale after 2 opened at Nightingale Lodge and that consequently one third of the provision has been lost. She indicated that respite was very important and that there was a need for the third bed.

It was agreed that once the response from Mrs Moore was received the Council would take the matter further.

8 Bill of Rights Training

Mrs McNight and Mrs Ferris agreed to attend the Bill of Rights Training in Ballybot House on 14 December 2001. It was agreed to forward the information to Mr Cummings.

102/5

SHSSB – BUILDING THE WAY FORWARD IN PRIMARY CARE SHSSC 2001/48

The Chairwoman welcomed Mr Eddie Ritson, the Southern Board's Director of Primary Care to update the Council members on developments in Primary Care.

Mr Ritson informed members of the Ministerial announcement on 16 October 2001 for new primary care arrangements in Northern Ireland. The arrangements would involve the establishment of Local Health and Social Care Groups (LHSCGs) and the ending of Fundholding in April 2002. The main responsibilities of the groups would include, improving delivery of primary care, promoting health and wellbeing of local populations and contributing to planning and commissioning.

The main aims of the LHSCGs would involve primary care professionals working in teams in local communities to encourage innovation and change across health and social care spectrum. It is intended that the new groups will be in place from 1 April 2002. It is expected that the Groups would cover populations of 50,000 to 150,000 and they would have the capacity to manage a delegated budget for commissioning from April 2003.

He said issues to be addressed included, local configuration, 'Board' composition and appointments process, accountability framework, developing devolved commissioning, training and

development, communications strategy, engaging the local communities and local and centralised functions and structure.

In relation to the role of the Southern Health and Social Services Board, he said it had been charged with developing and supporting the LHSCGs in its area. As a starter the Board had invited all key stakeholders to a Board-wide workshop on 28 November to look at structure and membership. An invitation was extended to Council members to attend the workshop.

Mr Ritson proceeded to answer a number of questions from members regarding the cost of administering the new system, the possibility of linking primary care and social care, waiting times and community care packages.

11.50am Mr Cavanagh joined the meeting.

The Chairwoman referred to the Armagh Commissioning Pilot. She indicated that it was one of only 2 that had consumer involvement. She felt that lessons could be learned from the best aspects of this scheme and that the Council must be involved at the board level and not just consulted from time to time. Regret was expressed that there was no evaluation of the Armagh Commissioning Pilot.

Mr Cummings referred to the fact that the Council had been very involved with focus groups in relation to the Commissioning Pilot. The Chairwoman indicated that the Council was to be represented on the Project Board and suggested that there should be someone at the December Board Meeting.

The Chairwoman indicated that she hoped there would be true leadership and teamwork and cited the innovative approach taken by the GPs in Armagh. Mr Cummings felt that the example shown in Armagh should be rolled out across the Board area. He said that the Council should become involved and should influence structure.

Mr Ritson advised that he was still waiting for guidance from the DHSSPS on the implementation of the new arrangements. He admitted that it would be difficult to meet the April target.

Mr Ritson admitted that there was no “endgame” but indicated that he was ambitious for the groups and optimistic for the future.

It was agreed that the Chairwoman, Mrs Harris, Mrs McNally (morning only) and Mrs Campbell (afternoon only) would attend the workshop on 27 November.

The Chairwoman thanked Mr Ritson and he left the meeting.

102/6

**SHSSC – RESPONSE TO ACUTE HOSPITALS REVIEW
GROUP SHSSC 2001/49**

The Chairwoman referred members to paper SHSSC 2001/49 – the Council’s response to the Acute Hospitals Review group (Hayes Report).

She informed members that the response was prepared following a meeting of the Council’s sub group on 17 October 2001 and forwarded to the DHSSPS prior to the closing date of 31 October.

A short discussion took place regarding the response. The Chairwoman thanked the members of the sub group for their assistance in formulating the response.

102/7

**CHANGES IN CORONERS’ AUTOPSY ARRANGEMENTS
SHSSC 2001/50**

The Chairwoman invited the Research Officer to present paper SHSSC 2001/50 regarding ‘Changes in Coroners’ Autopsy Arrangements’.

Miss McCoy said that on 16 October 2001, the Northern Ireland Office informed the Council that new mortuary arrangements for weekends and public holidays would take effect from 20 October. The new arrangements concern the transfer of bodies for autopsy from the hospital mortuaries at Altnagelvin, Antrim, Craigavon and Omagh to the Belfast City Mortuary.

The purpose of the proposed changes was to alleviate pressure on the State Pathologist’s department and to ensure its ability to continue to facilitate the early release of bodies by the coroners to bereaved families.

Following representation from public representatives, the Minister, Mr Des Browne, decided to postpone these changes pending further consultation with the representative of the mortuary technicians and undertakers.

There was discussion of the correspondence and the newspaper article.

Concern was expressed that the normal time scale for funeral arrangements would be disrupted. Mr Anderson asked if the situation was temporary. Mrs Harris raised the issue of those from different traditions and cultures – she cited the example of members of the Bahai faith whose bodies could not travel for longer than 1 hour after death. Mr Brannigan indicated that, unlike rural areas, there were no burials in Belfast at the weekend.

It was agreed that the Chairwoman would write to the Northern Ireland Office indicating that the Council was grateful about the decision to consult, seeking clarification, asking what monitoring/evaluation arrangements were in place and raising the issue of those belonging to other traditions.

102/8 SHSSC – ANNUAL REPORT 2000/01

The Chairwoman presented the Council's tenth Annual Report which had adopted a different format and was much shorter than previous reports.

The general view of members was that the new format was a positive step – it was less formal, less bulky and easier to read. It was felt that more people would read it.

Mr Cummings congratulated staff on the work that was put into it.

102/9 TRUSTS' BUSINESS SHSSC 2001/51

1 Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 18 September and Agenda for meeting on 16 October 2001.

There was discussion about the number of consultants in various disciplines – including radiology, obstetrics, breast surgery, and

cardiology – that the Trust had lost. Mr Cummings calculated that the Trust was down approximately 100 staff but still could not afford to pay its deficit. Members felt this was dreadful.

Mrs Harris asked how the Trust could be proud that its financial position had improved due to slowing expenditure on staff – reference the Trust Board minutes of 18 September 2001.

The Chairwoman indicated that there had been problems at the Trust for some time – but that this year they had become particularly acute. She indicated that this was not entirely the fault of the Trust and that the Council had written to various ministers over the years. She stated that there appeared to be no manpower planning and indicated that a strategy was required. She indicated that there was no surgeon with breast care experience who could move to the post at the Trust.

It was agreed that the Chairwoman would write to the Minister expressing concern about the problems at the Trust, which caters for two thirds of the population in the Southern Board's area. The Chairwoman would also write to the Trust about the matter.

2 Craigavon and Banbridge Community HSS Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 24 September 2001.

3 Newry and Mourne HSS Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 21 August and Agenda for meeting on 16 October 2001.

4 Green Park Healthcare Trust

Public Notice of Trust Board meetings

5 The Royal Hospitals HSS Trust

Public Board Meeting of Directors

102/10 FOR INFORMATION

- 1 SHSSB – R & I Unit Advisory Committee – Minutes of meeting held on 17 September 2001

- 2 SHSSB – Minutes of Board Meeting held on 9 October 2001
- 3 Building the Way Forward in Primary Care – Summary of Response to the Consultation – September 2001
- 4 SHSSC – Equality – Making it Work
- 5 SHSSC – Human Rights Act 1998
- 6 Royal Group of Hospitals – Press Release – ‘New RVH welcomes theatres’
- 7 DHSSPS – Service Pressures monitoring during winter
- 8 SHSSB – Waiting List for appointments with Community PAMS

102/11

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1 GP Out of Hours at Newry

Mrs Gray raised the issue of the unsuitability of the surface at the Out of Hours centre in Newry. She explained that the surface was rough and difficult to walk on. It was agreed that this issue would be raised with ASADOC.

2 Speech Therapy at Ceara School

Mr Simpson raised the issue of speech therapy at Ceara School. He told the Council that the parents of pupils had contacted him. He indicated that that the numbers attending the school had risen from 30/40 last year to 70/75 this year but additional speech therapists had not been provided – in fact they had lost speech therapists. Mr Simpson indicated that he had made representations to the Health Committee.

Mrs Foster asked whether it was known if the Trust had tried to recruit speech therapists and failed. She also raised concerns about the increase in the numbers of pupils. She asked where they had been before this year, and if the criteria had changed - had there been placement because there was a place rather than a need?

Mrs McNally and Mr Simpson indicated that they would forward letters they had received from parents.

Mr Brannigan suggested that the Chairwoman also write to Dr Cunningham, Principal of Ceara School. It was agreed the Chairwoman would write to the Trust and Dr Cunningham in order to clarify the position.

3 Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust

Mr Cummings said he normally attends the Trust Board meetings as a representative of the Council. As Mr Cummings would no longer be involved in this capacity the Chairwoman asked if any other member wished to attend. Mr Cavanagh agreed to attend the December meeting but this was not a commitment to attend on an ongoing basis. It was agreed to forward the papers to him.

4 Armagh Cancer Care Group

Mr Cummings said he was involved in the Armagh Cancer Care Group as the Council's representative but a new representative would have to be appointed. It was agreed to make a new appointment at the December meeting.

The Chairwoman thanked all the Council members who had served with her over the last 10 ½ years especially Mrs Allister, Mrs Gray, Mrs Campbell, Mr Cummings and Mr Loughran. She expressed great hopes for the Council in future.

Mrs Foster, on behalf of the Council, thanked Mrs Cook for all her work and said she was an inspiration to all on the Council. She said the Council was fortunate to have her as Chairwoman and that she would be a tough act to follow. The outgoing members endorsed Mrs Foster's sentiments.

102/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 13 December 2001 at 10.00 am

Signed: **Date:**