



SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of the One hundred and Thirteenth Meeting held in Quaker Buildings, Lurgan on Thursday 12 December 2002 at 10.00 am

113/1 PRESENT: Mrs Roisin Foster, Chairman
Mr Sydney Anderson
Mrs Lynne Cairns
Mr Jim Cavanagh
Mr Brendan Curran
Mrs Mary Ferris
Mrs Nazy Harris
Mr Clive Henning
Mr Peter Murray
Mr Wilfred McFadden
Mr Adrian McKinney
Mr David Simpson

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Delia van der Lenden, Chief Officer
Mrs Nancy Downard, Office Manager

APOLOGIES: Mr Pat Brannigan
Mr John Coulter
Mrs Sue Cunningham
Mr Isaac Hanna
Mr Brendan Montague
Mr John McArdle
Mr Charles Rollston

113/2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

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

113/3 MATTERS ARISING

1 Misuse of Disabled Car Parking Spaces at CAHGT

The Chairman informed members that the survey of designated disabled car parking spaces which was to have taken place on 26 November 2002 was not able to go ahead as planned and had been rescheduled for Friday 13 December 2002. Members would be kept updated on the findings of the survey.

Mr Henning raised concerns about the lack of car parking spaces available in No 1 car park for people attending outpatient appointments, particularly those with disabilities who would find it difficult to walk from car park 2. Where it is feasible hospital staff should be required to use car park 2 for all day parking. He said he felt that this was just as important as misuse of the disabled car parking spaces. It was agreed that the matter would be included on the agenda when the Chief Officer meets with the Chief Executive of the Trust.

2 Clinical and Social Care Governance

The Chairman advised members that Mrs Cairns, Mrs Ferris and the Chief Officer would attend the workshop in the Seagoe Hotel on Wednesday 12 February from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm.

3 Green Park Healthcare Trust

The Chief Officer reported on the ongoing correspondence with Green Park Healthcare Trust regarding the Trust's refusal to make available the full set of papers relating to Trust Board meetings to the Councils' representative. The Trust has cited the issue of resources as the reason behind their refusal.

A letter of response had been forwarded to the Chief Executive referring to the Council's remit for monitoring Green Park's regional services on behalf of service users from the Southern area. Access to the Trust Board papers is essential if the Council is to carry out its monitoring function effectively. Members will be kept informed of the outcome of the correspondence.

4 SHSSC Media Strategy

A number of dates had been provided by Mr Coulter and it was hoped to have the first meeting of the media strategy group in mid December or in the first week of the New Year.

113/4 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

1 Christmas Lunch

Members were reminded of the Christmas Lunch in the Seagoe Hotel at 1.00 pm, following today's Council meeting.

2 Hillsborough Reception

The Chairman reported that she and the Chief Officer had attended a reception in Hillsborough Castle hosted by the Minister for Health, Mr Des Browne MP. The purpose of the meeting was to enable the Minister to meet key people within the DHSSPS family on an informal basis. It also gave the Minister the opportunity to set out his agenda and priorities for the coming months. She said there was a strong message that the agenda set by the NI Assembly would be taken forward at full speed. Decisions on the future of the acute hospitals would be known by the end of January.

113/5 **CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT**

1 NI Ambulance Service Trust Board

The Chief Officer said she had the opportunity to attend the NI Ambulance Service Trust Board's monthly meeting in Craigavon Civic Centre in November. Reporting on some specific issues of interest to the Southern area she said reference was made to the fact that response times were generally poorer in the Southern Board's area than in the rest of NI and that resources were at the root of the problem. Reference was also made to the new cardiac ambulance service in Newry and Mourne which uses specially trained paramedics who communicate with medical staff via computer and phone links. Although the service has been seen as a success it has experienced some

problems because of the poor mobile phone coverage in the Newry and Mourne area. It was agreed to follow up on this issue and keep members informed.

2 SHSSB Meeting - 10 December 02

The Chief Officer updated members on topics discussed at the Southern Board's meeting on 10 December. The report on waiting list for the period April to September showed that whilst there was a small drop in inpatient numbers, day case waiting lists had increased. The numbers waiting in excess of charter standards had increased for both inpatient and day cases. Information had been presented to the Board meeting on the range of measures being taken to reduce waiting lists. A written report on the measures will be available for January's Board meeting and this will be circulated to members.

Regarding the opening of the extra 36 beds at Craigavon Area Hospital, it was reported that good progress was being made with the building. The Philippino nurses had been recruited and were awaiting registration with the Nursing Council.

The Chief Officer also reported that Mr Clive Gowdy, Permanent Secretary, DHSSPS attended the Board meeting and after the formal business there was the opportunity to discuss with him and his colleague Mr Paul Martin, a range of topics, including the consultation on Developing Better Services. Decisions on structures were likely to be linked to the progress on the Review of Local Government. In relation to the future of Health and Social Services Councils Mr Gowdy indicated that few of the responses had focused on the issue of consumer representation. He raised the question of whether health services consumers' needs could be served by a general consumer council rather than a specific HPSS body.

3 Wraparound Scheme

The Chief Officer provided information for members on the Southern Board's Wraparound Scheme, which sought to improve the quality of life for children with disabilities and their families. There were eight separate projects included in the scheme, including a one-stop child development clinic, the

MENCAP family support and play advisor, and a project which sought to involve children with disabilities in strategic planning of services. She informed members that she had attended a health impact assessment workshop earlier this year; a report of that workshop is now available. The Complaints Officer had recently been involved in a further workshop and would also be involved in the Stakeholder group of the project. Regular reports would be made to members on the impact of the project. It was intended to have Dr Farrell make a presentation on the Wraparound project to the Council in the New Year.

4 Development of a new Regional Strategy for Health and Social Care

The Chief Officer advised members that work had begun on the development of a new Regional Strategy that would contain the vision for health and social care for the next 10 to 20 years. The current strategy would run out in March 2003 and officially the plan is to produce the new strategy for that deadline but this deadline is unlikely to be achieved. Consultation on the development of the strategy would begin soon. She reported that she had attended two workshops on the issue and had been invited to sit on a small regional steering group working on the development of the strategy.

**113/6 DHSSPS - Consultation on a Proposal for an Order in Council
SHSSC 02/40**

The Chief Officer referred members to the DHSSPS consultation on a proposal for an Order in Council. She informed members that the Department issued a consultation document last year entitled, 'Best Practice - Best Care', which examined the need for a framework to raise the quality of service and tackle issues of poor performance in the HPSS. The original document proposed the setting up of an independent Health and Social Services Improvement Authority that would be responsible for monitoring standards of care, and a second organisation, 'A NI Commission for Care Services' that would take the role of the current 4 R&I Units but have an extended remit for day care and other services as well as residential care.

As a result of the consultation the Department now proposed a single independent body, the NI Health and Social Services

Regulation and Improvement Authority to take on the dual role of monitoring standards and regulating services. The Department is now consulting on the detail of the legislation prior to it being laid before Parliament in Westminster by way of an Order in Council.

Members agreed that the Council should respond to the document welcoming the fact that the roles are to be combined in a single organisation.

113/7 A STRATEGY FOR THE PROVISION OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH A VISUAL IMPAIRMENT
SHSSC 02/41

The Chief Officer referred members to the Southern Board's consultation on, 'A Strategy for the provision of Health and Social Services to People with Visual Impairment.' The document had been issued to members for the November meeting in order to allow for sufficient time to consider the issues prior to the Council responding to the document.

Following discussion on the detail of the document it was agreed that a response would be framed to incorporate the views expressed by members.

113/8 MEMBERS' DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP - REPORT (Tabled)

The Chief Officer referred to the members' development training which took place on 16 September in Armagh City Hotel. She thanked Mrs Ferris for compiling a summary of the proceedings and said the proposals documented in the report were examined and a series of actions had been suggested in relation to their implementation.

Proposals were agreed in relation to increasing public awareness; conduct of meetings and members' participation.

Members discussed the proposals in relation to networking with local community and voluntary groups; conducting meetings in external venues; members undertaking speaking engagements on behalf of the Council, press presence at meetings; issuing press statements; the Council's newsletter; visits; streamlining meetings;

lobbying MLAs; meetings with the Southern Board; conduct of meetings; and complaints.

The recommendations were approved by members.

Mr Cavanagh joined the meeting at 11.25 am

Mr Anderson left the meeting at 11.30 am.

113/9 SHSSB - MONTHLY UPDATE ON CARE MANAGEMENT PRESSURES SHSSC 02/42

The Chairman drew members' attention to the Southern Board's monthly update on care management pressures, which was presented at the Board meeting on 10 December 02.

The Chief Officer said this was the third monthly report produced. Figures for August had indicated a particular problem with the waiting list for community care packages in Armagh and Dungannon Trust area. While there is still cause for concern each month has shown an improvement in the waiting list. While other community Trusts had relatively few people waiting for packages within the Care Management system, not all clients within the system had their care needs fully met, and there were significant pressures on community care generally. The Chairman informed members that she would be involved in the review of community care and would raise the issues when she met with the Director of Social Care in January of the New Year. Members would be kept updated.

113/10 TRUSTS' BUSINESS

SHSSC 02/43

1 Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust

Minutes of Trust Board Meeting held on 2 October and agenda for meeting on 4 December 2002

113/11 MEMBERS' FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

There were no reports from meetings.

The Chief Officer reminded members that the Council, currently, was not represented at meetings of the Craigavon and Banbridge

Community HSS Trust. Hopefully a member will be available to attend in the near future, but in the meantime the Chief Officer proposes to attend some of the future meetings.

113/12 VISITS - Verbal Reports

1 Drumglass Lodge and Woodside Adolescent Centre, Dungannon

Mr Simpson reported that he and Mr Anderson had visited both Drumglass and Woodside which were adjoining each other. They found facilities at both were excellent and had a homely environment. There was only one resident in Drumglass at present and 5 in Woodside although none were on the premises at the time of visiting. Over the years 35 young people had passed through Drumglass Lodge and they still stayed in contact with the staff. This was seen by members as a positive indication.

2 Cedar Grove, Newry

Mrs Ferris reported on Cedar Grove, Newry which was visited by a team of 5 Council members. They met with Ms P Magner, Manager, and Mr Jim Flynn and Mr Paul Carlin, N/M HSS Trust. Mrs Ferris said this was a short stay facility for children and 50 children had been to the home in the last 3 years. The longest stay for anyone was 6 months. A full report would be prepared by Mrs Ferris and sent to the facility and the Trust for comment. Issues raised by the members following the visit will be discussed with the Trust management and members will be kept informed of its response.

113/13 FOR INFORMATION

- 1 SHSSB - Minutes of Board Meeting held on 12 November 2002
- 2 SHSSB - Annual Report 2001/02 - Progress Through Partnership
- 3 SHSSC - Schedule of Meetings for 2003

113/14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1 Future of Health Councils

Mrs Harris suggested that the Council should read and consider what had been put forward for CHCs in Scotland and Wales and create a strategy of reform for the Council. We must look at what the consumer expects of the Council and put forward a structure to the Department outlining how we deal with our responsibilities and how we can be more effective.

The Chairman indicated that there would be an opportunity during the second stage of the consultation on structures to fully debate issues regarding the future of consumer representation. Mr Murray said the reality was that we would have a regional authority. He would like to see an independent consumer body with an independent budget. Mr McKinney asked if there was any possibility of a name change for the Councils within the current system. Mr Simpson felt that it would be useful to form a consensus regarding the issue of consumer representation with the other 3 Councils and agree a mechanism for taking the issue forward.

It was agreed that the Chief Officer would discuss the matter with the other 3 Councils and report back to members.

2 Ambulance Service in Banbridge Area

Mr McFadden highlighted a recent case in Banbridge where a patient was discharged from the Royal Victoria Hospital and only a short time after being discharged had to return to the hospital but when the ambulance was called the patient was taken to Daisy Hill Hospital. Daisy Hill Hospital was of the view that the patient should have been taken to the Royal Hospital. Mr McFadden expressed the view that the ambulance service should have had the liberty to go to the Royal Victoria Hospital in a case of this nature.

2 Expression of Sympathy

The Chairman expressed sympathy to Mrs Joan Baird, former member of the Council, on the death of her sister in law and asked Mr McFadden to pass on the Council's condolences.

3 GP Out of Hours Centre, Newry

Mr McFadden raised concern about the Out of Hours service provided by the GPs in the Newry and Mourne area, and in particular, the availability of prescriptions. He related to a case where a young child had taken ill during the night and the parents could not get a GP call out. Grandparents had to be called to look after the other child in the home while the sick child was taken to Newry Out of Hours. As no prescription service was available at the Out of Hours or in Newry, the parent had to drive to Warrenpoint to a chemist. Mr McFadden said the issue of providing out of hours pharmacy services would have to be addressed. Mrs Cairns expressed concern that the family should have been required to take a sick child out in the middle of the night. It was agreed that both issues would be raised, generally, with the Out of Hours Service at Moylinn, Craigavon.

4 Newry Hospice

Mr Murray referred to the £1m deficit of the Newry Hospice and the possibility that it may have to close. He said the Southern Board had been very generous to the Hospice for many years but asked for the support of the Council in appealing to the Southern Health and Social Services Board for additional resources to meet the shortfall. He said groups throughout the Newry area were trying hard to raise additional funds. It was agreed to write to the Board to express the Council's view on the value of the service and the need for support to ensure the service continued.

5 Social Project in Bulgaria

Mrs Harris informed the Council of a project she had undertaken in Bulgaria, establishing a hospital with services for oncology, maternity etc. She indicated that all the equipment for the hospital was being sourced from Northern Ireland. The Council wished her well in her project.

