

SOUTHERN HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

The One Hundred and Forty-fifth Meeting held in the Community Relations Council, Linen Green, Moygashel on Tuesday 21 February 2006 at 10.00 am

145/1

PRESENT:

Mrs Lynne Cairns, Chairman
Mr Norman Badger
Mrs Nazy Harris
Mr Lawrence Donaghey
Ms Sharon Haughey
Mr Clive Henning
Mr Peter Kearns
Mr Jim McCart
Mr Wilfred McFadden
Mrs Florence McMahon
Mr Kieran Murphy
Mr Kenneth Twyble
Dr Philip Weir
Mrs Eileen Wright

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs Stella Cunningham, Chief Officer
Mrs Nancy Downard, Office Manager
Mr John Mone, Director of Nursing, CAHGT [for part of the meeting]
Mrs Jane McKimm, Public Relations Officer, CAHGT [for part of the meeting]

APOLOGIES:

Mrs Annie Burrell
Mr Peter Murray
Mrs Sylvia McRoberts

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

Dr Margaret Nelson, Castlecaulfield
Mrs Isobel Holmes, Dungannon Health Forum

The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting and advised them that the Standing Orders would be waived and there would be an opportunity for them to ask questions at the end of each agenda item.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Lawrence Donaghey, a new member, who has been appointed to the Council to replace Dr John Coulter, who resigned. Mr Donaghey will serve until May 2009.

145/2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

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

145/3 MATTERS ARISING

1 Casualty Watch

The Chairman informed members that Casualty Watch was conducted in Craigavon and Daisy Hill Hospitals during the week commencing 30 January 2006. A number of members took part in this project and a draft report was being prepared for discussion by the sub group at its next meeting on 7 March. Members would be kept updated.

2 Roadshows

The Chairman reported that the Council was conducting a number of Roadshows to gather information on GP services under the new GMS contract, and help raise the Council's profile with members of the public and local communities. The Roadshows were being held throughout the Southern Board's area and have already been held in Armagh, Newry and Portadown. The Banbridge, Dungannon and Kilkeel areas are scheduled for early March.

3 SOCIAL EDUCATION CENTRES

In response to Mr McCart's query about funding for new SEC Centres in Banbridge and Newry, Mrs Cunningham advised that funding had been secured for the Newry Centre. In relation to the Banbridge SEC she said the Trust agreed to advise the Council when further Information was available from the DHSSPS.

Members requested that the Council write again to the DHSSPS to establish the position and send a copy of the correspondence to the local MP.

Members who had not previously visited the facility in Banbridge had asked that a further visit be arranged. The

group included Lynne Cairns, E Wright, N Harris, and Peter Kearns.

4 GMS Lay Assessors

Mrs Cunningham informed members that after Mr Murray reported receiving a donation from a GP for a Lay Assessor visit, she had written to the Board's Director of Primary Care expressing her concern. She said it was laudable that GPs recognise that the current arrangement with lay assessors is insufficient. Mrs Harris suggested that the Board should have a special fund that the GPs could contribute to for this type of service. Mr McCart said he would be against any donations from GPs as it compromises the integrity of the assessor. Mrs Wright felt that there would be great difficulty in recruiting new assessors as the £10 payment was an insult.

145/4

CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

1 Resignation

The Chairman reported that Mr Matthew Hagan had tendered his resignation from the Council, due to other commitments. She said the Public Appointments Unit had been informed but had indicated that the Council's reserve list had now been exhausted and no further appointments would be made until they explore the implications of the RPA and its impact on public appointments.

2 Quay 100 – The Station that's Local to Newry & Mourne

The Chairman informed members that Mr Brian Rowntree, Chair of Quay 100, had written to the Council seeking support for a new radio station in the Newry & Mourne area. Following discussion members agreed that the Council should support, in principle, the establishment of a radio station in Newry and Mourne but not favouring any particular group. The letter should be short and precise.

3 RMAG – Annual Conference

It was agreed that Mrs Wright would attend the conference in the Rosspark Hotel, Ballymena on 8 March 2006.

145/5

RPA/4COUNCIL CONFERENCE REPORT SHSSC 06/01

Mrs Cunningham referred members to paper SHSSC 06/01 which provided a brief on the NI Councils' conference held in Limavady on 24 and 25 January 2006. It outlined the conference programme and the workshop outcomes and also set out the next steps for the way forward. The report would be circulated to the DHSSPS, Members, staff, Trusts and Boards.

She said the 4 Councils had been asked to nominate a representative and a deputy to sit on the Departmental PCC Project Team. The SHSSC would be represented by herself with the Chairman as deputy. The first meeting of the group would take place on 10 March 2006.

The HSS Councils' Executive Committee would operate in a shadow form to the PCC Project Team and a mechanism would be developed to ensure that input from members was accommodated.

Departmental timescales for taking forward the PCC proposals were very tight as the legislation must be prepared by June 2006. Council meetings may be revised to permit meetings with a single item agenda. These items would be determined by the Executive Committee and scheduled to keep in line with the work of the PCC Project Team. Some meetings would be open to all 4 Councils' members. The first meeting to provide feedback from the PCC Project Group will be held on 13 April.

Mr Weir said that due to work commitments he could only attend the conference for a short time but he was struck by the fact that members were saying that the Councils had no teeth and no powers but were sometimes regarded as an irritant. He said that if we are to be a scrutinising body and representing patients and users of the services, then we should be asking that the new Trusts and Commissioning bodies should meet with us throughout the year to answer questions. He said a strong case for this must be made to the Department.

Mr Twyble agreed with Mr Weir and suggested that the PCC should be established as a similar body to that of OFCOM or Postwatch, both of which had great influence on their Boards.

Mr Murphy suggested that the Councils use their MPs to lobby and make sure that the Bill, when it comes to before Parliament, can be amended. He said Politicians should be lobbying for powers for the PCC.

Mr McFadden said he felt that a move towards one Health Council in Northern Ireland would be a retrograde step but he had great confidence in the Chairman and Chief Officer to put the case for local representation and was hopeful that the Minister would listen to them. He agreed with Mr Murphy about keeping in touch with our MPs and asking them to support the work of the Council.

**145/6 SHSSC/PROSPECTS NEWRY DAY OPPORTUNITIES
REPORT – ‘WE ARE PEOPLE TOO’ SHSSC 06/02**

Mrs Cunningham referred to the report, ‘We are People Too’, a project undertaken with PROSPECTS Newry Day Opportunities – a voluntary organisation providing day services to 16 adults with learning disabilities. The group decided that they wanted their views on GP services to be heard and the Council undertook it as part of its work on monitoring the new GMS Contract.

At the launch in Armagh City Hotel on 9 February, the group presented the report to Dr Keith McCollum, GP Advisor for the Southern Board. Dr McCollum said it was an excellent report and he intended using it as a training tool for GPs. The report will be circulated widely.

**145/7 SHSSC – RESPONSE TO PRIMARY DENTAL CARE
STRATEGY – CONSULTATION SHSSC 06/3**

Mrs Cunningham referred members to the response to the Primary Dental Care Strategy consultation. She said the response had been prepared on behalf of the 4 Councils and focused on the public and service user perspectives. Members were asked for their comments on the document prior to it being submitted.

Mr McCart expressed concern regarding the situation in Kilkeel where 1 practice had closed its list to NHS patients and another had a waiting list. He asked that a letter be sent to the

Southern Board asking that steps be taken to alleviate the situation. Mr McFadden seconded the proposal and said the population of the area would almost double in the summertime. He said there seemed to be a problem across the Board's area with dentists closing their practices to NHS patients. Mr Weir asked for the letter be copied to the Minister for Health.

It was agreed to write to the Chief Executive of the Southern Board and to highlight the issues in a press release.

145/8

CAHGT – UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENTS AT SOUTH TYRONE HOSPITAL INCLUDING THE MINOR INJURIES UNIT

The Chairman welcomed Mr John Mone, Director of Nursing and Mrs Jane McKimm, Public Relations Officer, Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust, to update the Council on developments at South Tyrone Hospital, including the Minor Injuries Unit.

Mr Mone thanked the Council for inviting him along to the meeting. He reported that Care of Elderly Services at South Tyrone hospital included an 18 bedded Medical Assessment Unit on 'A' floor, for patients in the 65+ range with varying levels of dependency. There was also a 23 bed assessment / rehabilitation Unit at Loane House II.

Regarding the Day Hospital, he said it comprised of a 15 placement unit on the ground floor, providing medical assessment and review clinics; nursing; a falls clinic which commenced in 2005; and hairdressing facilities. Services provided by A/D Trust to CAHGT patients include physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and Social Worker services. Other services available on request were dietetics and a diabetes advisor. The outpatients department covered a wide range of services.

Nurse led ear care is a new development which commenced in March 2005. It has reduced waiting times for Clinics and has increased the number of new referrals seen by the consultant.

A new waiting list initiative for ENT has been introduced from January to March, with an additional clinic of 14 to 18 patients held every Tuesday morning.

Children's Services include an ambulatory paediatric clinic from 9 – 5 each week day, which provides for pre-assessment for children going for ENT surgery at Craigavon Area Hospital, community paediatric, constipation, rapid access, and epilepsy clinics, and a multi-disciplinary Child Development Clinic.

In the Radiography Department, radio-diagnosis and imaging is carried out and there is also a radiology scanning suite for CT scans, ultra sound scans and bone densitometry. The ECG department provides a range of diagnostic techniques for cardiology and respiratory investigative procedures.

Services at the Theatre / Day Procedure Unit are provided by consultant surgeons from Craigavon Hospital and Royal Group of Hospitals. The Trust is planning a day surgery orthopaedic list to start in March or April, to examine patients with knee and hip joint problems. This will be facilitated by the new Orthopaedic Surgeon in Craigavon Area Hospital. Inpatient care will be carried out at Musgrave Park Hospital.

The Minor Injuries Unit is currently medical led and is open Monday to Friday from 9 – 5 pm except for Bank Holidays. Extension of the opening hours will take place from 24 April 2006. It will function 365 days, 9am to 5pm and will have an Emergency Nurse Practitioner or a doctor providing the services. However, children under 1 year and under 5s who require an x-ray will not be treated in the unit. Mr Mone said that ultimately the plan was to recruit more nurse practitioners in Craigavon Hospital so that they would be rotated between STH and Craigavon, as there was a need for them to be exposed to more complex work.

The Ophthalmology Initiative which commenced on 13 November and completed 30 November 2005 treated 161 patients.

In relation to Urology, an initiative is underway, with an independent provider, to reduce the waiting lists. Surgery commenced on 23 January 2006 and will be completed by 31

March, treating in the region of 300 patients. Following this it is hoped that no patient will be waiting for more than a year for urology surgery.

In concluding, Mr Mone said that whilst the Out of Hours service did not come under his remit, it would transfer to STH in June 2006.

Mr Mone responded to questions from members in relation to the utilisation of the hospital for essential services, the use of the scanner, the ophthalmology initiative, and the recruiting of staff.

The Chairman thanked Mr Mone for his very informative presentation and he and Mrs McKimm left the meeting.

145/9 TRUSTS' BUSINESS

1 Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust

Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 17 January and Agenda for meeting on 21 February 2006 (tabled)

145/10 FOR INFORMATION

- 1 SHSSB – Minutes of Board meeting held on 10 January 2006
- 2 SHSSB – Monthly Update on Care Management Pressures – December 2005
- 3 Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust – ‘All Told’ – Issue No 21

145/11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1 Out of Hours

Ms Haughey suggested that the Council write to the Board in relation to the movement of the Out of Hours service. She said it was important that the Board kept the situation under review to ensure that it is working out and that people were being facilitated properly. She was concerned that after midnight the service would involve a lot of extra travel for patients in the rural areas.

2 Ambulance Service

Mr McFadden asked for pressure to be kept on the Ambulance Service to ensure provision of a 24 hour service in Banbridge and cover in the Rathfriland area.

3 Casualty Watch

Mr Henning explained that during the Casualty Watch at Craigavon Area Hospital, Dr Carson expressed a certain amount of disquiet that trolley waits were under the remit of A&E. It was agreed to write to the Board and specify this.

Mrs Cunningham said this could be explored with Debbie Burns, Bed Manager at CAHGT when she attends the next waiting list sub group meeting.

It was agreed that the Bed Manager should be invited to attend a future meeting.

4 LHSCGs

In response to Mrs Harris' question about Council representatives attending LHSCGs' meetings, Mrs Cunningham said there seemed to be some confusion about the role of the LHSCGs. She explained that LHSCGs were in a commissioning role and that the Council represents the users.

5 Craigavon Area Hospital

Mr Murphy said that since he had been appointed to the Council he had become much more observant when making visits to Craigavon Area Hospital. He highlighted a number of concerns in relation to some of the facilities.

- ❖ The lack of car parking facilities at the Hospital.
- ❖ The condition of the toilet facilities for visitors - the one in the corridor is always out of use while the state of the one in outpatients is disgusting.
- ❖ No accommodation for mothers who have to stay over with small babies or young children. A young nursing mother of two weeks had to sleep on a mattress on the floor. This is not a satisfactory arrangement, bearing in mind she was still recovering from her caesarean section.

- ❖ Maintenance work observed being carried out in the maternity ward during visiting hours should not be permitted.

Mrs Wright said she was the Council's representative on the Environmental Cleanliness Group at the Hospital and would raise these issues at the meeting in the near future.

Mrs Harris reported that she was the representative on the Hospital's Car Parking Group and discussions were ongoing regarding car parking arrangements. She indicated that car parking charges would be introduced and the contract was likely to be given to an independent group.

2 Apologies

Mrs Harris asked that the reason for absence be recorded when apologies are given.

145/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 21 March 2006 at 10.00 am in Quaker Buildings.

Signed: _____

Date: _____