

SOUTHERN HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of the One Hundred and Fifty-first Meeting held in Quaker Buildings, Lurgan on Thursday 14 December 2006 at 10.00 am

151/1 PRESENT: Mrs Lynne Cairns, Chairman
 Mr Norman Badger
 Mr William Burns
 Mrs Mary Ferris
 Mr John Feehan
 Mr Lawrence Donaghey
 Mrs Nazy Harris
 Mr Clive Henning
 Mr Peter Kearns
 Mr Kieran Murphy
 Mr Peter Murray
 Mr Jim McCart
 Mr Wilfred McFadden
 Mr George Savage
 Mr Kenneth Twyble
 Mrs Eileen Wright

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Stella Cunningham, Chief Officer
 Mrs Nancy Downard, Office Manager

APOLOGIES: Mr Brendan Curran
 Mrs Florence McMahon
 Mrs Sylvia McRoberts
 Dr Philip Weir

151/2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

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

151/3

MATTERS ARISING

1 Kilkeel Out of Hours

Mrs Cunningham informed members that she had written to Mr Eddie Ritson, the Board's Primary Care Manager, expressing concern about the delay in progress on the Out of Hours service in Kilkeel. She said Mediation Network NI had been asked by the Board to look at the situation, with a view to bringing the parties together to try and resolve the problem. The Council was invited to send a representative to a meeting in Kilkeel on Tuesday 12 December 2006 but unfortunately Mr Burns was unable to attend.

Mr Burns said he understood Mediation NI was conducting a number of meetings in the area and had already met some community groups.

Mrs Cunningham said the Council needs to consider how best to support and add value to the exercise.

2 Banbridge SEC

Mrs Cunningham reported that she sat on the Southern Board's DBS Strategy group which agrees all capital investment. She said she expressed concern when she realised that there would be no immediate funding for Banbridge SEC. The group anticipated that the SEC would be incorporated into the health village in Banbridge. She also referred to a letter from the Chief Executive of the C/B Trust indicating that an outline business case was being prepared by the Trust in relation to day services, which would impact on the services for the Banbridge SEC. Therefore, the situation in relation to learning disability services generally and the Banbridge SEC was not clear.

Mr McFadden said he found it hard to understand the thinking of the Board and the Trust when they purchased Ballydown old primary school while still considering the Banbridge hospital site. He said he felt very dissatisfied with what he was hearing as there was nothing happening at the hospital site.

Mrs Wright said she wished to underline that the purchase of Ballydown School was a silly decision and the making of it fit for purpose was a waste of resources. She said that the present

SEC would be closed if there was a health and safety assessment carried out on it. The Council should be making a case for the people in the SEC who need the care today. Mrs Wright suggested that the Council request a public meeting with the Chief Executive of the Trust.

Mr Murray concurred with Mrs Wright and said the standard of environment in the SEC was deplorable and there was no effort to seek the local people's views. A lot of money was being wasted.

Mr McCart said he was surprised to hear that a building which was abandoned for education was now going to be used for the SEC.

The meeting agreed to raise the matter with the Chief Executive of the new Southern Trust when he attends the next Council meeting.

3 Incontinence Pad Service at Kilkeel Health Centre

Mrs Cunningham informed members that she had written to Mrs O'Hagan, Director of Nursing at the Newry & Mourne HSS Trust and had received a response which indicated that the difficulties for people collecting pads for more than one person had been investigated. Mrs O'Hagan advised that when the new appointment system was introduced patients were advised to contact the continence service located at the Gate Lodge in Newry if the time allocated was unsuitable, or if multiple collections were to be collected by one person. To date all requests had been facilitated for changes to previously allocated appointment times.

Mrs O'Hagan also informed the Council that the new appointment system has encouraged greater confidentiality as there were no long queues. All patients have been awarded a unique 5 minute appointment.

Mr Kearns suggested that the SHSSC should monitor the situation. Mr Murray suggested holding a future monthly Council meeting in the New Health Centre which was an excellent building.

It was agreed to arrange a visit to the Health Centre in the New Year.

151/4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

1 Report from HSS Executive

The Chairman reported that the HSSCs met on a monthly basis to discuss developments around the PCC and to develop a 4 Council approach. The next meeting would take place on 15 December 2006. Members would be kept updated.

Mr Murray referred to the way the DHSSPS was dealing with the impending changes and noted that District Councils would no longer have a nomination right to public bodies.

Mr Murphy asked if, under the new disposition, representation would be based on a demographic area.

Mrs Cunningham informed him that people would make an application and be selected on the ability to manage the organisation rather than to represent local people. She said the HSSCs had raised with the DHSSPS the importance of having local knowledge within the PCC.

Mr Twyble said the Council should be asking what criteria will be used for the selecting process as this would apply to all local bodies.

Mr Murphy proposed that the political parties be lobbied for their support. This was seconded by Mr Kearns and agreed by other members.

Mr Savage supported the proposal and said there should be more co-operation between the Health Council and the District Councils. He suggested that the media be invited to any forum that is planned.

It was agreed that the Chief Officer would propose to the HSSCs' Executive that political party health spokesperson should be invited to a future 4 Council event.

2 Feedback from 4 Council Workshop

Mrs Cunningham said the HSSCs' Executive had been considering how they would plan their meetings over the next year. The Executive had considered replacing one Council meeting per quarter and using this as a 4 Council event to involve speakers on regional issues and provide members with regular updates on the progress of the PCC. The other two meetings in the quarter would continue as individual Council meetings.

Mr McFadden said this was a good idea. Mrs Cunningham agreed to keep members informed of developments.

3 Feedback from Lay Assessor Training

Mrs Wright said she was not at the training but received a training pack which she found very useful. She referred to the Patient Representative Form that had to be completed and asked for clarification on the point where it asked if the practice had set priorities for the next two years. It was agreed to check this with the Board's Primary Care department.

Mr Murray reported that overall the training was very good and beneficial to members and the presentation by Doctor Watson was very informative. He said the training should be ongoing. However, in relation to questions about the survey, it was not possible to elicit information in respect of finances provided to practices.

Mr Murphy and Mr McCart agreed that it was not in the public interest to know what each GP was provided with financially.

Mr Murphy was concerned about the length of time it takes to get an appointment with a GP in the Dungannon area.

Mrs Wright raised the issue of standardisation of the premises that the GPs use and wondered how the equation was balanced.

4 Newry & Mourne District Council Health Service Working Group

At the invitation of Newry & Mourne District Council, Mr Kearns and Mr Murray were nominated as representatives to attend

and contribute to the Council's Health Service Working Group meetings which are held on a bimonthly basis.

5 CAWT – Presentation of Research Findings on Border Road Safety

Mr Feehan agreed to represent the Council at the CAWT Steering to Safety Project - launch of the findings of recent research, on Thursday 25 January 2007 in the City Hotel, Armagh from 11.30 am to 1.00 pm.

151/5 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

Mrs Cunningham presented her report on the following matters:

- **Staff Briefing** – Although the situation regarding the future of staff employment was not clear, the HSSC Executive continued to actively represent the best interests of the staff.
- **Staffing levels** – are fluctuating and it may be that staff on temporary contracts may decide to leave the HPSS. This could result in the Council being left short staffed and therefore could affect the Council's ability to respond to issues.
- **User Involvement** – Following the 4 Council workshop which was facilitated for the DHSSPS, the Department was seeking to develop guidelines on user involvement for the new HPSS bodies. This will be an ongoing important piece of work.
- **Rural Medicine Working Group** – The 4 HSSCs were invited to facilitate a community/user workshop for the DHSSPS, to look at access to inpatient services in local and rural hospitals. The workshop has been scheduled for 10 January 2007 and members with an interest in rural medicine are encouraged to attend. Follow up sessions are likely to be held in the local communities.
- **RPA consultation** – The HSSCs have been asked by the DHSSPS to assist in the formal consultation on the new HPSS structures particularly in relation to community and patient interest groups.
- **GP Out of Hours Service on a Cross Border Basis.** Mrs Cunningham said a paper was out for consultation and she

- invited input from members who had an interest in the topic. Mrs Wright said she was happy for the Chief Officer to prepare a response on behalf of the Council.
- **Standard of Good Practice for Counselling Services** – Draft guidance has been produced by the DHSSPS and the Council has been invited to comment. Mr Murphy expressed an interest in assisting with the response. It was agreed that the Chief Officer would prepare a draft and share it with Mr Murphy prior to submission.
- **Managed Clinical Network for Unscheduled Care** – in the Southern area this has been approved by the DHSSPS and approval for a second network for radiology has been applied for. Mrs Cunningham said she represented the Council on both networks. She hoped to invite a speaker to a future Council meeting to update members on progress.
- **Campbell Surgery, Dungannon** – The surgery has been given approval to close its list to new registrations for 12 months. The Parkview Surgery has now relocated to South Tyrone Hospital site and has once more opened its lists. The SHSSB hopes that the move will allow Parkview to increase its list size over time to ease pressure on other practices in the area.
- **SHSSC Newsletter** – Mrs Cunningham referred members to the Council's newsletter which had been tabled. She said it would be produced twice a year and circulated to community groups.

151/6

REVIEW OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Mrs Cunningham reported that the DHSSPS Reconfiguration Programme Board was preparing a document looking at the 4 possible options for the PCC. The document should be available in February 2007.

Mr Murray congratulated Mrs Cunningham on the enormous amount of work that she was doing in relation to the RPA and said it was much appreciated.

151/7

DENTAL STRATEGY

SHSSC 06/14

(i) Snap-shot survey

Mrs Cunningham referred members to a snap-shot survey of dentists in the Southern area. This was conducted as a result of the increasing number of complaints by people who were

experiencing difficulty in getting registered with an NHS Dentist in the Southern Board's area. A telephone survey was carried out with all dentists in the area to assess what the situation was. The findings showed that over 50% were only registering private patients.

(ii) Update

Mrs Cunningham reported that she had written to Heather Clarke, the Director of Dental Services at the Board expressing the Council's concerns. A copy of the survey was included with the letter. She informed members that she has also met with Miss H Clarke and Mr Richard Graham and they too were very concerned about the situation but were having difficulty in getting the DHSSPS to move on the contract.

Mrs Cunningham tabled a draft letter on behalf of the 4 Councils and asked members to consider the content and if approved she would then submit it to the DHSSPS.

Mr Murray said there were a lot of elderly people in the community who are on a low income and didn't have the money to have their teeth attended to. Mr Murphy wondered if there was anything in the system to help these people.

Members approved the draft letter for submission to the DHSSPS, and agreed that the snap shot survey was a very useful piece of work.

151/8

HPSS COMPLAINTS

Mrs Cunningham referred to the DHSSPS leaflet entitled, 'Have your say' which highlighted the consultation document, Complaints in the HPSS, published on 20 November 2006.

Mrs Cunningham reported that the 4 Councils in conjunction with the DHSSPS was holding a Complaints workshop on 25 January 2007 in Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown from 10.00 am to 1.30 pm. The DHSSPS representatives would make a presentation on their proposals and members of the 4 Councils would have an opportunity to express their views in the workshops. Members were encouraged to attend the event.

151/9 NI AMBULANCE SERVICE HSS TRUST – VISIT

The Chairman reported that the Chief Officer, herself and a number of other members had made a visit to the NI Ambulance Service Control Department at Knockbracken on Tuesday 28 November 2006. She said it was extremely fascinating to see how the control system worked. Calls for the whole of Northern Ireland are dealt with through the centre and each area has its own controllers. She explained that when an emergency call was received the controller was able to talk to the person and instruct them in dealing with the situation until the ambulance arrived.

Mr McFadden said it was made clear on the day that the ambulance crew made the decision as to what hospital the patient goes for treatment.

Mr Kearns suggested that some other way must be found to accommodate people who go for appointments rather than having them use the emergency services.

Mr Henning said it would be useful if the Council could put together a number of bullet points to advise the public what to do in the case of an emergency.

At the request of Mr Donaghey, it was agreed to provide him with information on ambulance response times.

Members agreed that this was a very impressive visit.

Mrs Harris joined the meeting at 11.25am

151/10 PRESS RELEASE TOPIC

Two areas were highlighted:

- (a) The appointment of Councillors/members to the PCC.
- (b) Getting an appointment with GPs in Dungannon.

151/11 FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

Mrs Ferris said she could no longer attend Board meetings of the Newry & Mourne HSS Trust and asked if another member could take her place. Mr Murray said he deputised for Mrs Ferris when she was unable to attend. Mrs Cunningham pointed out that there would only be 2 more meetings.

151/12 TRUSTS' BUSINESS

- 1 Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust
Minutes of Board Meeting held on 6 September 2006
- 2 Craigavon and Banbridge Comm HSS Trust
Minutes of Trust Board meeting held on 9 October 2006
- 3 Craigavon Area Hospital Group Trust
Minutes of Board Meeting held on 17 October 2006 and agenda for meeting on 21 November 2006
- 4 Newry & Mourne HSS Trust
Agenda for Board meeting on 21 November 2006

151/13 FOR INFORMATION

- 1 SHSSB Meeting held on 12 October 2006
- 2 SHSSB Annual Report 05/06 – Your Health and Care
- 3 SHSSB – Latest Weekly Waiting List Position – 6 Nov 06
- 4 SHSSC – Newsletter (tabled)

151/14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1 Waiting lists/Private Patients

Mr Savage referred to a couple of instances where people who were waiting for hospital appointments were told that if they

paid for the treatment they could be taken immediately. He said this concerned him very much and it set a very bad image of the system when those who can afford to pay are able to jump the waiting list queue.

Mrs Ferris said people must learn to complain and they must be educated to speak up for themselves otherwise they will be lost in the system.

2. GP Appointments

Mr Burns reported changes to the GP appointment system in Kilkeel Health Centre, which was causing difficulties for some patients. Mrs Cunningham had raised this with the SHSSB.

3. Pathology Services

Mr Murray said he had been asked to raise the issue of pathology services at Daisy Hill Hospital and the reduction from a 24 hour service to a 12 hour service.

Mrs Cunningham informed him that there was currently a consultation on the service and the Council would make a response.

4. Resignation

Members expressed good wishes to Miss Debbie Harrison, Temporary Clerical Officer, who had resigned from her post with the Council and had taken up a full time post with Craigavon & Banbridge Comm HSS Trust.

151/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 16 January 2007 at 10.00 am in Armagh City & District Council

The Chairman wished everyone a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year and invited all to attend the Christmas lunch in the Stonebridge Restaurant at Richhill.

Signed: _____

Date: _____