

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 23 JANUARY, 2012 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Bernard, Mrs. A.F. (Chairman)

Ball, G.D.

Grice, Mrs. D.

Beddows, J.

Molineux, G.N.

Davies, D.N.

Also Present:

Councillor J. Rowley, Staffordshire County Council

39. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M.J. Holder (Vice-Chairman) and County Councillor P. Jones

40. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members

There were no interests declared.

41. Minutes

AGREED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December, 2011 be approved as a correct record.

42. Items Arising from Staffordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman reported that she was unable to attend the meeting held on 6 January, 2012 but would provide an update to Members of the Committee in respect of the closure at Stafford A&E when the Committee reach item 6 on the Agenda.

43. Update on Cannock Health Centre

Consideration was given to the Briefing Note of the Head of Environmental Health (Enclosure 5.1 – 5.2 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Environmental Health advised Members of the Committee that a meeting had been held on 9 January, 2012 with the Chief Executive and Finance Director of Staffordshire

Cluster of PCTs where they advised that a decision had been made by the PCT Board in November, 2011 to cease the Cannock Health Centre Scheme. The reason given for this decision was due to the withdrawal of support by local GPs.

The Chairman and Members of the Committee discussed the original proposals and Members were of the view that Cannock were losing out having seen the benefits of other Health Centres within the District.

AGREED:

Members considered the current position with the Cannock Health Centre and did not wish to pursue any particular issues.

44. Update on Stafford A&E Closure

The Chairman reported that she had attended an accountability session at Staffordshire County Council last week and advised that a further session would be held on Thursday 26 January, 2012 commencing at 6.00 p.m.

The Chairman discussed the re-opening of Stafford A&E and advised the Committee that a decision on re-opening would be made through the Board on 26 January, 2012. However, she advised the Committee that it was likely that the date for opening would run over the original estimate.

At this point the Head of Environmental Health circulated a copy of the A&E Re-opening Task and Finish Group Action Plan Update 17 January, 2012 from Mid Staffs NHS Foundation trust. He commented that the Trust had interviewed a number of senior medical staff with a number recruited although it was found that problems existed trying to recruit middle grade medical staff. He referred to nurse staffing and advised that the Trust had implemented a full training programme which was currently underway. The ambulance service was running smoothly and patients were being transported between Walsall, Wolverhampton and North Staffs.

A Member asked for information on the number of patients transferred to each hospital from Stafford A&E. The Chairman advised that it was possible to obtain this information although it would not be possible to ascertain whether the patients stayed at the hospital or not.

The Chairman and Members discussed the work the Trust was currently undertaking and appeared pleased at the current progress, however issues were raised amongst Members of the Committee that clear leadership was needed and enthusiasm from staff towards the nursing profession.

A number of comments were raised by Members of the Committee around making sure that GPs and nurses were experienced and had the right attitude for the job, the hospital learning from patients past experiences and also concerns that provision of a new renal service might result in no renal unit being situated at Stafford Hospital.

Members of the Committee also discussed the cost associated with using both agency and bank staff and hoped that the Trust would not be using a high proportion of agency and bank medical staff. The Head of Environmental Health advised Members of the Committee that

the hospital currently had the use of its own bank of nursing staff that could be called upon if needed.

The Chairman asked if Members of the Committee had any questions for the Board. As there were no questions, she advised that the Committee should wait to see what the outcome was from discussions being held at the Trust's Board meeting on 26 January, 2012.

45. Consultation on Closure of Southern Staffordshire Mental Health Adult Day Services

Consideration was given to the Briefing Note of the Head of Environment Health (Enclosure 7.1 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Environmental Health advised Members of the Committee that the consultation period had been extended until 13 February, 2012 and Members had been given the opportunity to respond.

He referred to the consultation document and the options that were available particularly with regard to the Margaret Stanhope Centre, Burton-On-Trent, and asked Members of the Committee what their preferred option was.

Members of the Committee discussed the options available particularly option 3 closing the Margaret Stanhope Centre. Although this option had scored highest in the appraisal and would also make significant savings, Members were concerned that there would be a reliance on care being provided within the community and whether this would be enough for patients, especially those patients with more severe mental health problems.

The Chairman appeared concerned and commented that it was currently very difficult for people to be accessed as having mental health problems, and this could often place a strain on family members who were quite often the carers.

(At this point Councillor D.N. Davies left the meeting).

The Chairman and Members of the Committee having discussed this item were mindful that they had not had sufficient time to fully consider the consultation documents and agreed not to provide a formal response.

AGREED:

That the Health Scrutiny Committee would not provide a formal response to the Southern Staffordshire Mental Health Services Closures

46. Work Programme

The Head of Environmental Health circulated an updated Work Programme for 2011/12 to all Members of the Committee.

Members of the Committee discussed and noted the content of the Work Programme.

The Head of Environmental Health reported that he would try and arrange for a

representative from the Cannock Chase GP Commissioning Consortium to attend the next meeting scheduled for 6 March, 2012.

47. Date of Next Meeting

Members noted the date of the next meeting scheduled for 6 March, 2012.

CHAIRMAN

(The meeting closed at 5.35 p.m.).