

## **NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Northern Health and Social Services Council held at 1.30pm in Ballycarry Community Centre on Wednesday 2 April 2003.

### **PRESENT:**

In the chair:  
Mr J McFadden

Members:  
Mrs M Anderson  
Mrs M Baker  
Mrs M Beattie  
Mrs A Crawford  
Mr T Creighton  
Mrs J Drummond  
Mrs D Hamill  
Mr N Hamilton  
Mrs I Johnston  
Mr N Nolan  
Mr I Stevenson

In Attendance:  
Mr N Graham  
Mrs J Erwin  
Ms W Carson, Community Worker  
Mr D McKay, Causeway LHSCG  
Mr A Macarthur, Antrim and Ballymena LHSCG

Mr McFadden introduced Ms Carson, Community Development Worker for Ballycarry and Islandmagee who welcomed everyone to the Centre. Situated 4 miles from Whitehead and 7 miles from Larne, Ballycarry has in excess of 650 households. Islandmagee would have in excess of 1000 households. The majority of local residents would be with GPs in Whitehead with only a few registered Larne GPs. The two pharmacies in Whitehead provide an essential prescription delivery service. Local issues highlighted include distance from Antrim Hospital and lack of non-church youth clubs. Members suggested that since there was an absence in the area of such groups as smoking cessation, exercise, health promotion etc it may be opportune to seek funding to provide details of the community and voluntary programmes funded by NHSSB

during 2002/03. Mrs Hamill and Mrs Baker also referred to funding bodies known to them.

### **37/03 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mrs Adger, Mrs L Johnston, Mr Boyle and Mrs Cambridge.

### **38/03 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

Mrs Drummond extended a welcome on behalf of Larne Borough Council.

Mr McFadden commented on his and the Chief Officer's attendance at "Primary Care-Moving Forward", a conference for Local Health and Social Care Groups and an informal meeting with the Chairs of the four local Groups. He also referred to his attendance at a meeting of the NHSSB and a dinner and presentation to mark the retirement of several non-executive Board members. At a recent meeting with Mr Gowdy, Permanent Secretary, an opportunity had been taken to raise issues relating to delays in the appointment of replacement Council members and a review of the current mileage allowance rate.

### **39/03 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2003**

The minutes were agreed and signed.

### **40/03 MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING OF 5 MARCH 2003**

(i) Benefit forms

Mrs Brisbane, Disability Action, had contracted the office to say that the issue in relation to reluctance by some of the medical profession to complete details on benefit forms was being dealt with by Disability Action. If the outcome was not satisfactory they would come back to the council.

(ii) 27/03 Meeting with NIAS

The meeting with NIAS had been postponed. Attention was drawn to the establishment of the NHSSB Ambulance Liaison Group and the opportunity to be represented within this body.

(iii) 29/03 Retail Pharmacy Services in the UK

Members noted the recent decision to reject the recommendations of the Office of fair trading and not to deregulate pharmacies. A copy of the Pharmaceutical Contractors Committee (NI) response to the Office of Fair Trading Report had been received.

- (iv) 33/03 Consultation on Developing a Regional Strategy for the Health and Personal Social Services 2002-2003

Mr Graham indicated that there was still an opportunity for members to complete and return the consultation reply form to staff for inclusion in the Council's response.

- (v) 34/03 Meeting with RNIB

Members noted that the Director of RNIB, Susan Reid was unavailable to attend the May or June Council Meetings. The four Council Chief Officers had however, invited her to meet with them on 18 April 2003.

- (vi) 34/03 Consumer Rights Day

Mr Nolan reported on his attendance at an event organised by the General Consumer Council NI to mark World Consumer Rights Day.

## **41/03 VISITING PROGRAMME**

### April Visits

Arrangements were made for visits to Antrim Adult Centre and Lodge Health Centre.

### Visiting Reports

#### Carrickfergus Day Centre

Mr Nolan reported that about 130 clients use the centre with about 73 attending on a daily basis. The age range is from 1 to 93. With an increasing level of dependency more staff is required; however, staff recruitment is a problem.

The visiting Team welcomed the appointment of a link worker to the team and the opportunity to sit-in on a meeting of the Clients Council.

The importance of the facility in the area was highlighted and a recommendation made by the Visiting Team that the facility be refurbished.

Day Procedures Unit, Causeway Hospital

This report would be considered at the May Council Meeting.

## **42/03 TO CONSIDER BUSINESS OF COMMITTEE MEETING**

Administration Committee – 20 March 2003

In view of many other groups now recompensing user representatives for their time, Mr Creighton had felt it timely to write to the DHSSPS requesting a review of the mileage allowance. He also expressed his views about the demand made upon voluntary members and felt that an attendance allowance should be considered.

During discussion on the joint meeting with Homefirst Community Trust the issue of nursing home tariffs was raised. Members had been concerned to learn that some homes had increased their tariffs following the Government's introduction of a financial contribution towards the cost of nursing care for those who fund all or part of it. Mr Graham suggested that the Council obtain further detail then contact Mrs

Thornton, Manager of the Northern Board's Registration and Inspection Unit.

Private Nursing Home charges and the new domiciliary meals service within Homefirst Community Trust were suggested as areas for possible research topics to be included in the 2003/04 Business Programme. Members noted that the Council's Research Officer, Miss Ashton, would be leaving towards the end of April to take up a post in London.

## **43/03 NHSSB AMBULANCE SERVICES LIAISON GROUP**

Members noted that in response to a range of local operational issues raised in respect of ambulance services, NHSSB had decided to establish a Board wide liaison group. The first meeting would be held in June 2003 with further meetings on a bi-annual basis. The Board's Director of Service Performance and Development would chair the

meetings, providing a link with the regional Commissioning Group for Ambulance Services which he also chairs.

Mrs Beattie, Mrs I Johnston and Mrs Baker expressed interest in attending these meetings.

#### **44/03 MEETING WITH UNITED HOSPITALS TRUST BOARD MEMBERS ON THURSDAY 10 APRIL 2003**

Following discussion members agreed that the agenda include a report by the Council on the findings of the Casualty Watch, day procedure provisions within the Trust, trolley waits and EACC, Developing Better Services, skilled staffing shortages, hospital acquired infection and mixed sex wards. It was anticipated that the Trust would include an item on current pressures.

#### **45/03**

##### **PRESENTATION BY MRS GILL BURNS ACTING HEAD OF SERVICE, COMMUNITY ADDICTION SERVICE, HOMEFIRST COMMUNITY TRUST**

Mr McFadden welcomed Mrs Burns to the meeting. Mrs Burns outlined the services provided by the teams at Parkmore Drive, Ballymena, Railway Street in Ballymena and the in-patient unit at Holywell Hospital, Antrim and explained how these had evolved since the setting up of the Community Addiction Service in 1987. 50 staff now provides the Board-wide service. Referrals to all services are on the increase and although a lot of focus is on drug use, alcohol dependency is still a major problem. Mrs Burns stressed the need for early intervention and outlined various models of treatment and a number of service developments.

Mrs Beattie drew attention to under-age drinking in her locality, however, Mrs Burns stressed that the community addiction service was for adults only. Members were concerned to learn that there were no hospital beds in NI specifically for those aged under 18 with drug/alcohol problems.

Recent developments within the Addiction Service have been financially supported by the Drug Strategy Team and the Criminal Justice Working Group of the Northern Ireland Office up until March 2006. To secure services in the longer term, core funding issues need to be addressed.

Mr Creighton asked about the success rate for those using the service. Mrs Burns referred to a series of evaluations including psychological and qualitative measurements. Those injecting heroin have high relapse rate. Realistic treatment is focused at minimising harm.

Mr McFadden thanked Mrs Burns for her most informative presentation.

#### **46/03 PRIORITIES FOR ACTION 2003/2004**

Discussion on this document was deferred until the May Council meeting.

#### **47/03 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chairman referred to the correspondence list circulated with the agenda.

Mr Graham referred to some additional items of correspondence:

- DHSSPS Circular HSS (SC) 1/03 Improving Operating Theatre Performance
- NHSSB Primary Care Update March
- DHSSPS Guide to HPSS Consultants Distinction Awards Scheme 2003/04
- Report to the Chief Medical Officer 2002
- Response to the Office of Fair Trading Report on Control of Entry Regulations and Retail Pharmacy Services in UK
- Carers and Direct Payments Act (NI) 2002
- Letters from Review of Public Administration Team re: Secretary State's announcement that he would not be issuing a consultative document on the Review of Public Administration in the period during the run-up to elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

#### **48/03 OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business had been tabled.

#### **49/03 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7 May 2003 in the Magherafelt District Council area.

The meeting closed at 4.43pm.

Chairman

Secretary

Date 7 May 2003