

NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Northern Health and Social Services Council held at 1.30pm in Willowbank Business Park, Larne on Wednesday 7 May 2008.

PRESENT:

In the Chair: Mr Tom Creighton

Members:

Mrs Beth Adger	Mr Tony Quinn
Prof George Kernohan	Mr Ian Stevenson
Mr John Millar	Mrs Kate Swain
Mr Tommy Nicholl	Mr Andrew Wilson

In Attendance: Mr Noel Graham
Mrs Jacqui Erwin

39/08 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mrs Anderson, Mrs I Johnston, Mrs L Johnston, Mr Kinahan, Mrs Montgomery, Mrs Morrison, Mrs McClelland and Mr McClelland.

40/08 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

Mr Creighton reported on his attendance at meetings of the Modernisation and Improvement Programme Board, the Primary Care/NHSSC Forum and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. Mr Creighton referred to the number of new cases of Clostridium Difficile within the Northern Trust area and hoped that other Trusts were as open about the number of cases in their hospitals.

Mr Creighton invited Mr Nicholl to comment on his attendance at a recent meeting of the Northern Health and Social Services Board. Mr Nicholl reported that Miss McNair, the Board's Director of Nursing and Consumer Services had investigated the circumstances of a patient discharged at 1.30am and been assured that the patient had been treated and as there was no reason to admit, had been allowed to go home and that transport home had been available at the time. Mr Quinn, however, remained dissatisfied and felt that a room should be available in such instances. Clarity had been sought on the completion date of the Health and Social Care Centre in Ballymena and an update sought on ambulance services. An issue had been raised at the meeting in relation to the provision of the tissue viability service and Council

support was sought in requesting an increase in the number of tissue viability nurses.

Mrs Swain referred to the minutes of the Northern Health and Social Services Board meeting held on 20 March 2008. She drew attention to the mention that the Northern Health and Social Care Trust had received a total of £700k of recurring cancer services investment to reduce waiting times for patients and sought an update on current waiting times.

41/08 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 APRIL 2008**

The minutes were agreed and signed.

42/08 **MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING OF 2 APRIL 2008**

Membership Appointments

Concerns expressed at the previous NHSSC meeting in relation to the possibility of appointments to membership of a new Patient Client Council of retired health and social care personnel had been shared at the recent Joint Council event. Mr Creighton had also raised this at a meeting of the Modernisation and Improvement Programme Board. It was noted that a 1 year moratorium period currently existed, however, members were in favour of a longer period (up to 3 years) before retired health and social care staff could be appointed to paid posts within health and social care.

The Chief Officer referred to recent media coverage in this regard and members agreed to closely monitor the situation.

31/08 Joint NHSSC/NHSSB Meeting – 8 February 2008

The Chief Officer had written to the Northern Health and Social Services Board seeking clarification on the position with regard to the Health and Care Centre for Larne and the services provided within Inver House. In particular details had been sought of what consultations had taken place and what is planned with the Trust, primary care, locally elected representatives and the community and their representatives.

In its response the Board indicated that over the past year Board officers have had several meetings with local representatives and have facilitated a group of GPs and Trust staff in planning future provision. It was confirmed that a Health and Care Centre would significantly enhance primary and community care services in the area. Although this was not included in the Programme for

Government or the Investment Strategy for the period up to 2011, the Board would be keen to see such a development commencing early in the next spending review period.

It was suggested by members that there was a need for Larne Borough Council to actively pursue the establishment of a Health and Care Centre in its area.

31/08 Clostridium Difficile (C Diff)

Mr Graham updated members on the outbreak of C Diff within the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area. Professor Kernohan highlighted the effect of running a service at full capacity and the subsequent impact on controlling infection.

31/08 Healthy Living Centres

The absence of Healthy Living Centres in the Northern area had been raised with the Northern Health and Social Services Board. In its response the Board pointed out that despite there having been no successful applications for such Centres in its area, the Board, through its lead role in implementing Investing for Health and the Northern Neighbourhoods Health Action Zone has developed an extensive programme to improve health and well-being and reduce inequalities. The local approach taken to improving health and well-being and reducing health inequalities reflects the spirit and key elements of the Healthy Living Centre approach.

34/08 Joint NHSSC/Northern Health and Social Care Trust Meeting – 22 April 2008

Feedback was invited from members who had attended the joint meeting with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. Concern was expressed about the potential impact on services as a result of the need to effect efficiency savings.

37/08 Kilkeel Ambulance Station

Mrs Adger, Mr Millar, Mr Nicholl and Mr Stevenson commented on their visit to Kilkeel Ambulance Station. This is a three vehicle station and Council members had been impressed by the layout and facilities within the building. Mr Nicholl indicated that he would be encouraging Northern Health and Social Care Trust officers involved in planning the Ballymena Health and Care Centre, which would include a new ambulance station, to visit also.

43/08 **HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCILS' RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSALS FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE REFORM**

Mr Graham referred to the recent joint Council event when members had considered the options to replace the Health and Social Services Councils. A consensus had been reached on the way forward and Chief Officers were currently finalising the joint response. This would be shared with Council Chairmen before being submitted to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety by Monday 12 May 2008. A copy would be issued to each member.

44/08 **CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT**

Patient Client Council

Mr Graham referred to the consultation undertaken in relation to the preferred model for a Patient Client Council. Community groups in the Northern area had been consulted, meetings had taken place with political parties represented on the Health Committee and a Northern Ireland Local Government Association event had been attended. Findings had been brought to the joint Council event held on 1 May 2008.

Joint Council Event

Mr Graham indicated that the next joint Council event would be hosted by the Northern Council and would possibly focus on the work of the Health Committee and the Assembly.

Accountability Review

Mr Graham confirmed that the Accountability Review meeting with the Department would be held on Thursday 12 June 2008.

45/08 **ISSUES FOR NHSSC WORK PROGRAMME 2008/2009**

Mr Graham explained that in recent years Councils had prepared a joint programme of work, much of which had focused on maintaining a service pending the outcome of the Review of Public Administration.

Mr Graham referred to a request from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust for Council assistance in a survey to develop a baseline in regard to current patient experience. The initial focus would be in the hospitals across the Trust area. Council members agreed to help distribute and collect the questionnaires and, if required, assist people complete them.

Mr Graham drew attention to the internal restructuring within the Northern Health and Social Services Board to meet the commissioning challenges ahead. He explained that the Programme of Care configuration had been changed to five new Commissioning Teams, namely Children, Adults, Elderly, Scheduled Care and Unscheduled Care. Members agreed it would be useful to find out more details on the work of each of the teams.

These areas of work would be included in the Council's Work Programme.

46/08 **NHS DENTISTRY**

Mr Graham informed the meeting that Council Chief Officers and Chairmen would meet the Acting Chief Dental Officer, Mr O'Carolan on Tuesday 3 June 2008. Issues to be raised included the number of practices accepting new NHS patients, salaried dentist service, the number of dentists not accepting children under NHS care, recruitment of private dentists based outside Northern Ireland, the Dental Contract and the school dental service.

47/08 **VISITING**

Visiting Report

Cherry Lodge Short Breaks Unit, Randalstown

Cherry Lodge provides short breaks to children and young people under the age of 18 years old who have a disability. Since the Unit was taken over by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust 19 of the children have been taken back, the 4 who have not, will have their cases reviewed once appropriate nurses have been recruited. The Visiting Team reported that one of the bedrooms was out of use due to a strong smell of fumes and this had been raised with the Trust. It was noted that a range of improvements had since taken place. Members welcomed the detailed written response to the Chairman from Mr Houston, the Trust's Director Women's and Children's Services/Executive Director Social Work.

Mr Quinn voiced concern that there had been a lapse in health and safety and felt that Environmental Health staff should have been consulted.

There is great demand for the service provided at the Unit and it is hoped that a range of additional staff can be recruited.

May Visit

Arrangements had previously been made for a visit to Barn Court Children's Home, Carrickfergus.

48/08 **REPORTS FROM:**

Northern Investing for Health Partnership Involving People Sharing the Learning Summary Report Launch – 11 April 2008

Mr Nolan and Mr Graham attended the Launch, the aim of which was to inform key stakeholders and partner organisations about the outcomes of the Involving People Programme and to share key learning experiences that may help to shape and influence future working across a range of settings.

Arthritis Care Northern Ireland Annual Conference – 17 April 2008

Mr Stevenson attended the Annual Conference which detailed the work of Arthritis Care and issues that are currently affecting all people with arthritis.

Reception to mark the closure of Autism Awareness Month – 30 April 2008

Mr Millar welcomed the opportunity to attend the Reception. He particularly commented upon the address given by Wendy Lawson who has an Autism Spectrum Disorder and was mis-diagnosed with Schizophrenia for over twenty five years.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust Patient Experience Steering Group Meeting – 18 April 2008

Mrs Adger and Mr Millar commented on their attendance at the Trust's Patient Experience Steering Group Meeting. Mr Millar felt it would have been useful to have a baseline from which to go forward, however, the Trust appeared intent upon improving the image of Antrim Hospital.

Mr Quinn raised the issue of complaints and sought details on the type of complaints received by the Trust and the outcome. This would be requested from the Trust.

49/08 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The correspondence list had been circulated with the agenda.

Contact would be made with The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority about the Framework for Registration Standards.

An additional item of correspondence was:

- A Consultation on Regional Contract Document for Nursing Homes and Residential Homes

50/08 **OTHER BUSINESS**

The Bridge Association, Antrim

Mrs Adger reported that she and Mr Nicholl had been invited to a meeting at which parents of clients were in attendance. She confirmed that funding was now available for the next three years.

Laboratory Services at Causeway Hospital

Mr Stevenson sought an assurance that laboratory services would remain at Causeway Hospital. This issue had been raised at the joint meeting with the Board and would be followed up.

Role of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

Mr Stevenson sought information on the role of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority in relation to the public sector.

51/08 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Council Meeting would be held on Wednesday 4 June 2008 in Houston's Mill, Broughshane.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm.

Chairman

Secretary

Date