
MEETING	HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	31 JULY 2006
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS CUTHBERTSON (in the Chair), FRASER, GREENWOOD, KIND, LOOKER, MOORE and M WAUDBY
IN ATTENDANCE	PENNY JONES (Acting Chief Executive, SYPCT) JOHN BROWN (Assistant Director for Corporate Affairs, SYPCT) GARRY MILLARD (Director of Mental Health and Social Inclusion, SYPCT) ANNE BYGRAVE (Head of Learning Disabilities, Community Services) JOHN BETTRIDGE (Chair of York Voluntary Sector Mental Health Forum) SALLY HUTCHINSON (Chief Officer, Age Concern York) KEITH MARTIN (Head of Adult Services, Community Services)

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair invited Members to declare at this point any interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Cllr Fraser declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 (Scrutinising Selby and York Primary Care Trust's Measures to Restore Financial Balance), on account of his previous membership of UNISON, one of the main unions of the NHS.

Cllr Moore declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 on account of his wife's employment at the Priory Medical Group.

Cllr Waudby declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 on account of his wife's employment as a care worker.

8. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee held on 12 June 2006 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

10. FORWARD PLAN

Members considered a draft Forward Plan setting out business proposed for consideration at the next two meetings of the Committee.

The Chair indicated that future items for discussion would be guided to some extent by the Committee's decisions in respect of the next item on the agenda. It was noted that the Forward Plan contained some unexplained acronyms; this should be corrected in the next version to ensure that it could be understood by members of the general public.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan be noted.

11. SCRUTINISING SELBY AND YORK PRIMARY CARE TRUST'S MEASURES TO RESTORE FINANCIAL BALANCE

Members received a report which presented the Financial Recovery Plan prepared by the Selby and York Primary Care Trust (SYPCT) and asked them to decide how they wished to examine the impact of the savings measures set out in the Plan.

Members heard from and questioned the following speakers, who had been invited by the Chair to present further information on the Plan and / or their views regarding its potential impact upon individual service areas. The speakers' comments are summarised briefly below.

Penny Jones and **John Smith** introduced the Recovery Plan, explaining the reasons behind the savings requirements and the process followed in drawing up the Plan. It was stressed that all elements had been discussed with key stakeholders at an early stage in the process before working up developed plans in each area.

Anne Bygrave outlined the background to the proposals relating to Learning Disabilities services. These had been based largely upon savings arising from changes already planned in response to government requirements and the cost improvement programme, so were not expected to have any negative impact upon services.

Gary Millard introduced the proposals relating to Mental Health services. These were intended to make the 2.5% savings required across the country in this service area. The developed plans represented a joint effort, with the PCT working closely with Council officers to ensure that the quality of services was not affected. There had been some issues regarding communication.

John Bettridge commented on the Mental Health proposals from a voluntary sector / customer perspective. He noted that the reconfiguration of wards at Bootham and the closure of Redroofs were contentious issues and that the voluntary sector was keen to be consulted on any future changes. It was pleasing that the Plan included no reductions in funding to the voluntary sector. However, there were concerns about the uncertainty of future funding from the PCT and cutbacks to European funding.

Sally Hutchinson commented on the proposals relating to services for Older People from a voluntary sector / customer perspective. She expressed the view that there had been insufficient consultation on the Plan, and raised concerns about the proposals to reduce intermediate care beds at Archways and Grove House and speed up discharges from hospital. Other concerns included the effect on older people of changes to prescription charges, reduced referrals to hospital and staff cuts.

Keith Martin commented on the Plan with regard to its impact on services provided by City of York Council. He noted that the pace of change had made it difficult for the Council to comment on the proposals as they developed. The overall risk that the savings would impact on community services could be reduced by working together with the PCT. It was important that there be no increase to the 2.5% savings figure for Mental Health, as the level of investment in this area was already low. There were concerns about the reduction in intermediate care beds at the Groves and Archways and proposals impacting on occupational therapy and provision of equipment must be kept under review.

Dr Brian McGregor commented on Primary Care issues, and specifically the impact on GPs of the Referral and Clinical Advice Services (RACAS) introduced under the Plan. Some initial problems had been ironed out and the system was now starting to settle down and had proved effective in reducing hospital referrals. GPs still had concerns about some issues, including the impact of the prescriptions proposals. It was hoped that these would be addressed by the new referrals document, which was being re-written by GPs from across the region.

Once questions had concluded, the Chair proposed that the meeting be adjourned, to enable a representative from the York Hospitals NHS Trust to attend and for Members to discuss the issues further before deciding which aspects of the Plan they wished to scrutinise in depth and whether any of the proposals should be categorised as substantial changes requiring a statutory public consultation. The date proposed for the reconvened meeting was 2 August. Before a decision was reached on this proposal, Members discussed possible alternative dates for the meeting and whether their final decision might instead be deferred to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the meeting be adjourned, and reconvened at 4:30 pm on Wednesday, 2 August.*

REASON: To enable a representative of the York Hospitals NHS Trust to attend the meeting and to allow further discussion to take place before the Committee makes its decision.

**Note: Cllrs Fraser and Kind did not concur with the decision to adjourn and asked that this be recorded.*

I Cuthbertson, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 8.35 pm].