

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 4 February 2014.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Criswell – Chairman.

Councillors R C Carter, I J Curtis, D B Dew, R Fuller, P Kadewere, S M Van De Kerkhove, M C Oliver and J W G Pethard.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors K M Baker, C R Hyams and Mrs P A Jordan and Mrs M Nicholas.

84. MRS M NICHOLAS

In her absence, the Chairman reported that this would be Mrs M Nicholas' last meeting as a Co-opted Member of the Panel. The Panel placed on record its gratitude for the work Mrs Nicholas had undertaken and the contribution she had made to its work over the previous four years.

85. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 7th January 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

86. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Mrs P A Jordan declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute No 13/88 by virtue of her employment with the NHS.

87. NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel considered and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Executive Leader of the Council for the period 3rd February to 31st May 2014.

88. CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP: FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

(Mr R Murphy, Interim Local Chief Officer (Huntingdonshire System) and Mr K Poyntz, Assistant Director of Commissioning and Contracting (Huntingdonshire System), Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, were in attendance for this item).

(Councillor Mrs M Banerjee was also in attendance for this item).

With the aid of a report by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel gave consideration to the financial and operational performance of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. The Panel's attention was drawn to the Hospital's forecast outturn position, which was £2.9m over planned spending for the year. The CCG was working closely with the Trust to improve the position; however, financial penalties had been imposed upon the Trust in areas where local and national standards have not been met, for example, Ambulance turnaround times and establishing closer working practices with GPs. With regard to the performance levels achieved, some areas of the Hospital were experiencing increased levels of activity. A robust plan would be put in place to improve the Hospital's financial performance.

It was reported that the Accident and Emergency Department had been ranked as one of the top ten performing facilities across the Country and the best within the CCG area. Additional funding had been obtained from central Government to assist acute providers with additional pressures on the Accident and Emergency Department arising from poor weather conditions during the winter. The funding enabled patients to be cared for in their own homes or within the community. The Hospital had met required standards for infection control with no outbreaks of MRSA or C Difficile having been reported within the last six months. In addition, the relevant standards were being met for treatment referrals. The "Choose and Book" system appeared to be an area of concern but this was only minor in comparison to other performance indicators. In terms of contract compliance, queries had been raised with the Hospital around the provision of medical staff, the completion of mandatory training and local infection control issues. These matters were being addressed by the Trust.

The Panel was acquainted with the challenges the Hospital faced in the next financial year and the opportunities that would exist. It was intended that adequate plans and controls would be put in place to achieve a surplus outturn position by the end of 2014/15. The Hospital's vision was to specialise in District General core functions such as urology and dermatology services. Consideration was also being given to developing further the reablement ward, which provided key services for frail and elderly patients.

In response to a question asked by the Chairman, clarification was received that the review of third sector commitments was necessary because many of the existing agreements were made by the former Primary Care Trust and their purpose was not clear. Following a further question, the Panel was informed that the review of clinical thresholds would ensure that only those services for which there was evidence that they were required would be commissioned. The general principle had been adopted that every avenue should be exhausted before surgery was considered. Answers to questions about the appointment of an external "turnaround team", the means by which diagnostic waiting times were verified and the circumstances which had resulted in the cancellation of operations were also provided. Members then commented on the need for local residents to take greater responsibility for their own health and discussed initiatives employed by Circle Healthcare to empower employees and

boost staff morale. Staff morale and the management of complaints would be pursued by the Hinchingsbrooke Hospital Working Group.

There was a need for closer working practices to be employed between GPs and consultants in their general care for patients and in terms of validation. This was regarded as being key to improving quality and the CCG acknowledged that this could be addressed through the commissioning process when awarding contracts to GPs.

Having expressed their satisfaction with the performance of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and in thanking the Interim Local Chief Officer (Huntingdonshire System) and Assistant Director for Commissioning and Contracting (Huntingdonshire System) for their attendance at the meeting, the Panel welcomed representatives of the Commissioning Group back in six months' time to deliver a further report.

89. HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2014-16

(Councillor J D Ablewhite, Executive Leader of the Council, was in attendance for this item).

The Panel reviewed the content of the Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Plan 2014-16 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). By way of introduction, the Executive Leader explained that the document set out a proposed vision, together with strategic themes, aims and outcomes for the Authority. Members were advised that this was an evolving document and work was ongoing to develop mechanisms to deliver the themes and aims within the Plan.

Members were advised that the Plan had previously been the subject of consultation with the Corporate Plan Working Group and would be subject to refinement in light of comments by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels prior to its submission to the Council. It would come into effect on 1st April 2014 and would be complemented by a range of performance measures. The Panel suggested that the Corporate Plan Working Group should be involved in devising the performance monitoring arrangements for the Plan and that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels should have a role to play in monitoring the Council's performance. With this in mind, it was suggested that the Plan should include reference to monitoring.

Having commented upon the need to ensure that future decisions about Council services were informed by the Corporate Plan, it was

RESOLVED

that the Panel's comments on the Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Plan 2014-16 be conveyed to the Cabinet to inform its deliberations on this item.

90. CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULTS, WELL-BEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Councillor J W G Pethard reported on matters currently being considered by the Cambridgeshire Adults, Well-Being and Health

Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These included East of England Ambulance Service Trust Service Performance and Plans, Older Peoples Programme Update, Disabled Facilities Grants Top Up Policy and Learning Disability Out of County Placement Report.

91. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of studies being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Economic Well-Being and Environmental Well-Being).

92. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of actions taken in response to recent discussions and decisions. Meetings of the Elderly Patient Care and Consultation Processes Working Groups would be held on 24th February and 17th March 2014 respectively.

93. SCRUTINY

The 141st Edition of the Decision Digest was received and noted.

Chairman