

Minutes of the Meeting of the Orsett Hospital Task & Finish Group held on 25 February 2020 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Victoria Holloway (Chair), Joycelyn Redsell (Vice-Chair), Fraser Massey, Sara Muldowney and Shane Ralph

In attendance: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health/Interim Director of Children's Services
Tom Abell, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Transformation Officer, Basildon & Thurrock Hospital Trusts
Mandy Ansell, Accountable Officer, Clinical Commissioning Group
Kevin Brice, People's Panel Representative
Margaret Hathaway, Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Tania Sitch, Partnership Director Adults Health and Social Care Thurrock North East London Foundation Trust
Nicola Windsor, Transformation Programme Lead, North East London Foundation Trust
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

17. Apologies for Absence

Democratic Services advised that Ian Wake, Director of Public Health, had sent his apologies.

18. Minutes

The minutes of the Orsett Hospital Task & Finish Group held on the 10 October 2019 were approved as a correct record.

19. Urgent Items of Business

There were no items of urgent business.

20. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

21. People's Panel Representative

The Chair welcomed Kevin Brice, Chair of the People's Panel, to the meeting and asked for a brief update on why the Panel had been set up. Mr Brice stated that People's Panel had been set up in September 2018 following a

recommendation from Thurrock Healthwatch to provide an independent view on matters relating to the relocation of services from Orsett Hospital. The group had been set up with 12 members with public and patient representatives who were able to contribute to the aims of the plans. Some of the panel's concerns were the information available on the IMC plans, breakdown of services at Orsett Hospital, plans for services to each IMC, transport, parking, staffing, integrated services and growth within the borough.

The People's Panel had their own Terms of Reference, met frequently and arranged guest speakers. Tom Abell and Roger Harris had both been invited to present to the panel and had provided presentations with a site visit having been undertaken to the Tilbury IMC. Mr Brice stated the future aims of the panel would be to elevate process on the project plan, update membership, arrange meetings with Public Health and CCG, link with communications, confirm communication links were in place for the members of the public, continue to question and review the status of each IMC. Mr Brice stated that it was his intention to stand down as Chair but continue as a panel member.

Councillor Redsell as a member on the Bus User Group stated that bus companies were happy to work with the proposed four IMCs for connections required between each IMC and the connection to Basildon Hospital. Mr Brice stated that it was imperative to have a bus connection in place and had been a significant concern.

Members discussed the bus services that had been reduced from January 2020 and the lack of bus transportation to Orsett Hospital. Tom Abell stated that this had also been raised as a concern with hospital staff. Members agreed that this was a major concern that had to be addressed urgently and to ensure that services would be integrated into future travel plans. Councillor Ralph agreed to check the services and liaise with the portfolio holder. Roger Harris stated this would be included in the wider transport plan as the footfall increased. Conversations would be undertaken with operators before the IMCs were open.

The Chair asked Mr Brice what the feelings and thoughts of residents were at the time of the proposed plans were known compared to now. Mr Brice stated there had been a lot of negativity at the beginning as there was a lack of information on each site and what services would be going where. Compared to now where there was some acceptance that Orsett Hospital would close and some willingness to embrace the IMCs as long as they provided the appropriate services.

Councillor Ralph questioned whether the panel had raised any concerns on parking problems at Thurrock Hospital. Mr Brice stated the panel had raised concerns that there was insufficient parking at Thurrock Hospital and had to be addressed before the site was expanded.

The Chair thanked Mr Brice for his time this evening.

22. Orsett Hospital Site Visit (Verbal Update)

The Chair stated that an activity from the Terms of Reference was to undertake a site visit to Orsett Hospital which had been undertaken on the 10 February 2020. Members thanked Tom Abell and his team for a very informative site visit which enabled Members to see the current layout, services available and how those services worked now.

Councillor Muldowney questioned whether a decision had yet been made as to which IMC the eye department would be relocated to. Tom Abell stated there was two elements, the first being the eye clinic where outpatient appointments were broadly available would remain local. Work was being undertaken with the CCG on patients being referred to eye clinics and community opticians. The second element, eye theatre, would have a dedicated space which would be on the Grays site.

The Chair stated there was concern from residents on how Orsett Hospital would close, how it would look as services were decanted and how the hospital would remain to work for those residents that still visited up to the time the hospital closed. Margaret Hathaway stated this was a huge concern but patients would not notice any deduction in services until the Grays IMC had been built. There may be areas that may need to be closed off but those services would be moved into one area. Margaret Hathaway stated that once they were in that phase it would become more clear as to where and when those services would be moved.

The Chair questioned as part of the decommissioning plan and with the ongoing complex planning when Orsett Hospital would officially close. Tom Abell stated there was a business case for each IMC with timeframes on when the transitions would be delivered. With the current plan, which would be subject to many factors, would be for Orsett Hospital to be disposed of in 2025 with a contingency plan in place were the IMCs to be completed sooner than planned. Mandy Ansell stated at the IMC meeting held last week it had agreed some investment to bring in a significant senior Project Manager, to lead on this project and present what the project would like look time wise.

Councillor Ralph questioned the plans for expanding the car park at Basildon Hospital. Tom Abell stated that the site currently housing the laundry had been vacated with the aim to clear the site so this could service further car parking. Conversations were being undertaken with Basildon Council on a further piece of land to be made available for staff parking. Longer term regeneration plans of Basildon Council would be to locate an IMC in Basildon which would alleviate some parking spaces.

Councillor Redsell questioned whether having an IMC in Basildon would alleviate the pressures that are currently being put upon Basildon Hospital. Tom Abell stated that work was currently being looked at the outpatient services which Thurrock residents used at Orsett Hospital and those outpatient services used at Basildon Hospital with a view to identifying those services which could be moved out to the IMC. This would be helpful and improve the services for Thurrock residents as part of that plan.

Councillor Redsell stated that the business case should include that smaller procedures could be undertaken more locally to save residents having to go into hospital. Mandy Ansell stated from the view of the IMCs it was the intention to seek to do these more locally either through general practitioners or through NELFT services.

The Chair stated that although Orsett Hospital was not serving 100% of Thurrock residents there was always some confusion as to what it meant when there was mention of services being moved and questioned when the activity analyse would be carried out. Also how would Members be able to scrutinise what had become before in Orsett Hospital against what comes after to ensure that Thurrock residents get better services and that services had not been moved out of the borough. Margaret Hathaway stated that once the activity analysis had been undertaken at Orsett it would present an opportunity to look at services and activity. That some services had morphed over a number years in terms of being delivered at Orsett Hospital where others had been at Orsett Hospital because there was space for them. When services are to be split amongst multiple sites assurance needed to be given that those people who use those services are the local people that use that centre. A clear indication can be provided as to what services Thurrock residents are currently using in Orsett, what services residents are using at Basildon Hospital that could come locally and then the destination of where these activities would go. That activity was available now and a review could then be completed once the IMCs were running and activity analyse could be completed again to demonstrate that the transferred activity was now carrying on in the IMCs.

The Chair stated the information was helpful and would be useful to have that activity analysis now and useful for Councillors to understand which services would be going where.

Councillor Ralph questioned whether the plans had been future proofed for population growth. Margaret Hathaway stated that the formula had been based on population with signification growth allocated into this requirement and how facilities could be used differently. Roger Harris stated that this was an opportunity to have centres of specialism offering a more holistic approach with an integrated way of offering services.

Councillor Muldowney questioned whether once the primary care services were in place in the IMCs should this provision be improved. Mandy Ansell stated that better facilities would attract more general practitioners, to increase the ability to have bigger patient lists, shorter waiting times and open hours being increased.

The Chair questioned the future of the Orsett Hospital site and whether there would be a provision for a medical centre to be built on there. Tom Abell stated that the site would be sold. From the engagement events it was clear that residents visited Orsett Hospital for blood tests and this formed part of the aims to provide this facility locally. Planning approval for an extension had

been approved for the general practitioners practice in Orsett with the facility for blood tests to be undertaken there.

The Chair questioned whether the building belonged to the NHS and how the proceedings from the sale be used. Tom Abell stated the monies would remain within the Basildon Trust and would be used to reinvest into the IMCs. The Chair stated that this was a considerable amount of money which would impact positively on other areas and Councillors would fight hard to keep.

Councillor Redsell questioned why residents had to go to Basildon, Southend or Thurrock to get blood tests. Tom Abell stated this facility was being looked at to expand the services more locally with the on-line booking facility working well. Tom Abell agreed to provide a list of where blood tests could be undertaken within the borough.

23. Thurrock Hospital and Corringham IMCs Site Visit (Verbal Update)

The Chair stated that an activity from the Terms of Reference was to undertake a site visit to Thurrock Hospital and the proposed site for the Corringham IMC which had been undertaken on the 20 January 2020. Members thanked Officers on providing an understanding of the complexity of the sites and agreed that seeing the sites had helped with the understanding of what the options there would be. Tania Sitch stated that NELFT staff and clinics would be in all four IMCs but agreed that further communication needed to be undertaken with residents. The Chair stated that this communication should also include staff as well as residents.

Councillor Ralph stated that the Council should be re-engaging with Graham James School on their concerns with patient parking. The Chair suggested that the IMCs could be seen as a benefit to residents for not just health reasons, but for the other facilities and clubs that will be available on site.

Councillor Redsell stated that parking was the main concern at the Grays IMC. Margaret Hathaway stated the Grays IMC was a big site but this was an opportunity to get the parking and the traffic flows right. That there were 250 back based staff at Thurrock Hospital which would reduce office accommodation and would be a key decision in the planning.

The Chair stated that parking and travels plans should be considered as a separate item of the planning and strategy.

Councillor Redsell stated the Council had to be mindful of residents that lived near Thurrock Hospital and communications would play a vital part.

Councillor Massey questioned how the unused and some complex spaces on the site would be used after 2023. Margaret Hathaway stated that this would depend on the master plan and review of the buildings as to whether to make better use of or to demolish buildings. That vacant space could be decorated and utilised but was dependent on the condition and would be known once the master plan had been delivered.

The Chair questioned whether the green spaces would remain on site. Margaret Hathaway stated these were part of the master plan and would only be used for traffic flow. The green spaces were there for the wellbeing of both staff and patients.

24. Integrated Medical Centre Programme (Verbal Update)

Tania Sitch provided the following update:

Corringham IMC – This IMC was further advanced with planning permission already approved. The business case had been written and would be presented to the Capital Programme Board on the 24 March 2020. Once signed off the tendering process would start in May 2020 with building work commencing in October 2020 with the IMC opening in 2022. As agreed, communications would continue with the public on concerns over parking and transport.

Roger Harris provided the following updates:

Purfleet IMC – Schedule specification in place with the service specification had been passed to Purfleet Centre Regeneration Limited (PCRL) for building design before being submitted for planning permission. There were a vast number of business cases in place with the estimate date of the site opening being 2023.

Tilbury IMC – This was a council development in Tilbury Civic Square. Service specification had been signed off with Pick Everard the design consultant testing the new service requirement against the existing requirements and subject to planning and the agreement of the business cases the estimated date of the site opening being 2023.

Grays IMC – Owned by EPUT who would be the landlord but have the least services on site. At this time it would not be possible to provide a firm date of the site opening as lots of work had still to be undertaken. There was also potential that the opening could possibly be in a phased approach. Margaret Hathaway stated the Trust and EPUT would agree on how to take this forward to be more clinical and possibly to be more of a health village. That in one to two months' time a time line may be clearer and have more of an idea what the site would look like.

25. Date of Next Meeting

The Chair advised Members that the Terms of Reference originally proposed for the Task and Finish Group had covered and achieved a lot of the aims that had been set and proposed that this item now be incorporated back into the scrutiny of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Chair asked that a report be presented at the next meeting covering the information on the site visits, people's panel, proposals and recommendations.

Members unanimously agreed for this to be item to be continued under the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme.

Roger Harris agreed to prepare a report for next week's meeting but this report would be tabled due to the tight timescales for the agenda to be published. Roger Harris asked for agreement that the report should cover:

- Clear transition plan
- Reconnect work with the community
- Stronger communications
- Activity analyse
- Reconfirm principles of the MOU
- Address issues around bus and transport plans
- Car Parking, particularly at Thurrock Hospital site
- Report to every other HOSC meeting

Members agreed to the above points with the Chair stating there should be emphasis on the urgency of having the IMCs up and running and provisional dates known. Councillor Redsell stated that the four IMCs would provide better facilities and thanked all those involved. Councillor Muldowney stated there should still be some inspiration to have a hospital in Thurrock.

The Chair thanked all Members, Officers, CCG and NHS Representatives for their invaluable contribution to the group.

The meeting finished at 8.27 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**