

## **Minutes of the Meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 19 July 2023 at 7.00 pm**

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**Present:** Councillors Mark Hooper (Chair), Georgette Polley (Vice-Chair), Tony Fish, Terry Piccolo and Neil Speight

**Apologies:** Councillor James Thandi

**In attendance:** Ian Wake, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health  
Ceri Armstrong, Senior Health and Social Care Development Manager  
Jeff Banks, Director of Strategic Partnerships  
Emily Hughes, Deputy Director of System Pathway Development  
Ian Kennard, Commissioning Manager - Personalisation  
Aleksandra Mecan, NHS Mid and South Essex ICB  
Diane Sarkar, Chief Nurse and Quality Officer, Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust  
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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

### **1. Minutes**

Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 9 March 2023 were approved as a correct record.

### **2. Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items of business.

### **3. Declarations of Interests**

Councillor Polley declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Item 7, ICB Community MSK and Pain Service as in her role as a councillor she had been appointed by the council to the Council of Governors for MSE for the non-executive directors.

Councillor Polley also declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to her employment with the NHS Ambulance Service.

### **4. Terms of Reference**

The committee's terms of reference were noted.

## 5. Integrated Medical Centres Update

The following PowerPoint was presented to members:

[\(Public Pack\)Integrated Medical Centre Update Agenda Supplement for Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 19/07/2023 19:00 \(thurrock.gov.uk\)](#)

The following points were raised:

- All Members raised their disappointment, shock, and frustrations that Thurrock had been promised four health hubs across the borough and were now being told otherwise.
- Members had recognised the additional expenditure of those hubs in comparison to the running of Orsett hospital.
- It had been recognised that business cases had been presented in the past without the appropriate funding being in place.
- The Tilbury hub would be a priority, looking at smaller buildings to accommodate those functions that had initially been planned for.
- A report would be provided at the November HOSC meeting on the detail options for consideration. There would be a comparison process looking at the original plans against the new preferred options.
- Those options should be available by mid-August, system partners would receive updates by the end of August-mid September with a view to presenting those options at HOSC in November.
- Members were reassured that Orsett Hospital would not close until services had been relocated which would be undertaken on a phased approach. This had to a clear message for residents.
- Members requested a written report going forward that would be published in the agenda.
- There will be a “lift and shift” of children hub services, these would be between the ages of 0 to 18-year-olds.
- Members requested more quantification within those reports to include operational capacity.
- It was expected to have six general practitioner fellowships in place within Thurrock by the end of the year. Members noted this was not what was originally promised.
- Members questioned the maintenance back-log at Orsett Hospital to which they were informed there was a plan in place that considered reactive maintenance and planned maintenance.
- Members recognised changes had been made to bus services and transport links, therefore travel plans would need to be reconsidered. Parking also needed to be a consideration.
- There were concerns around the name ASOP for the Aveley, South Ockendon and Purfleet on Thames IMC to which Members had not heard before.
- Member asked for further details of Plan B which would be discussed outside the meeting.

- It was recognised that residents needed to be kept aware of decisions being made.
- Offered the help of the HOSC committee to make any further representations.

## **6. ICB Community MSK and Pain Service**

The report presented the new Community Musculoskeletal (MSK) and Pain service for patients aged 16 years and over, serving the whole of Mid and South Essex, to improve patient access, experience, and outcomes.

The following points were made:

- Members discussed the channels which referrals could be made and were assured that in terms of treatment times there would be no disparity on which route the referral was made. Every patient would be treated in date order.
- Members stated there had to be an alternative option for those that did not want to go digital.
- Next stage of the program would be to analyse how many people used the on-line referrals facility.
- Kim James, Healthwatch, stated that Thurrock Healthwatch had not been involved with the process and the survey had not been shared with them as it had stated in the report.
- Member raised concerns on funding, officers confirmed this funding would come from the Integrated Care Board and utilise existing resources rather than additional funding being sought for staff. In regard to additional funding that would form part of the business case being presented to the board. There would be a financial analysis of any funding that would be required.
- Members were informed it was highly unlikely but still a risk and would be identified in the risk register as a low risk that no bids would be submitted.
- Members requested a copy of the Appendix be sent to them.
- Members requested item to be returned to committee for an update.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Democratic Services to organise copies of the Appendix and send to Members.
2. Democratic Services to add this item to the work programme.

### **RESOLVED**

**Members of the Thurrock HOSC supported the plans to implement a new single Community MSK and Pain Service, details of which are set out in this paper. The service would offer equitable provision and pathways for all residents of Mid and South Essex.**

## 7. HealthWatch

HealthWatch raised their concern on the vast number of patients in the last month who had experienced real difficulties with services from Basildon hospital, particularly gynaecology services. There seemed to be a lot of problems with people being put on two-week pathways, cancer pathways, who had attended their appointments but after weeks of waiting were yet to receive any results or support. A similar problem with Southend Hospital where patients had been discharged after having surgery but not receiving any information nor any community support.

It was recognised there had been a problem with the producing of discharge letters.

Respective conversations had taken place between Healthwatch, Aleksandra Mecan and the hospital and actions were now in place and complaints had been made in line with the failures process.

Members agreed for this item to be updated in the HealthWatch item on the work programme work at the next meeting.

Councillor Polley agreed this could be raised through her as she sat on the Council of Governors.

### **ACTION**

3. Democratic Services to add HealthWatch item onto the work programme for all future committee meetings.

## 8. Verbal Update - CQC report on Basildon Hospital

Members were provided with a verbal update on the current CQC report. The CQC carried out their inspection in January and February 2023 and inspected medical course services across MSE. This had been triggered by an increased number of complaints by patients to the CQC. The inspection only inspected the medical course services on each site with the report being published in June this year, rating medical core services as inadequate. This was deemed to be not acceptable. The full update can be heard under Item 8 of the agenda from the following link:

[Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Wednesday 19 July 2023, 7:00pm - Thurrock Council committee meeting webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

The following points were raised:

- Councillor Hooper thanked all those involved in the HOSC member visit to Basildon Hospital.
- Raised concerns that these were basic CQC standards set by the Government, that were not being met.

- Members questioned how the hospital had got into this position to which they were informed there were no excuses, contributory factors such as 180 beds being opened across the trust that required an increasing number of staff, increased number of patients and staff vacancies which had contributed to the poor level of care.
- Members were informed that almost all of the escalation beds were now closed with recruitment significantly increasing for both doctors and nurses.
- Members recognised there needed to be a strategic approach so that shortages of staff would be covered adequately.
- Members were informed that additional agency and bank nursing staff were recruited on a daily basis.
- It was noted the report covered all the three hospitals under the trust and that each had their own different demographics, all having different contributory factors. It was also recognised the hard work being undertaken by doctors and nurses who were under immense pressures.
- It was recognised there was an issue around mealtimes not being supported and offers of help from patient's relatives should be accepted.
- It was noted that no board member had made an apology on the failure of the management of the hospital.
- In regard to the staffing situation the nurse staffing vacancy rate was now 14% and dropping to around 5% in September.
- Recruitment was on going in regard to international nurses, student nurses, staff undertaking nursing associate programmes and local nurses.
- The chair thanked Diane Sarkar for the update and reiterated why people were upset as this was basic care to ensure that patients were safe in that environment.
- Requested the item be added to the work programme for an update on the feedback of the CQC report and this to form part of a written report.

## **ACTION**

4. Democratic Services to add the CQC Inspection item onto the work programme for all future committee meetings.

*Diane Sarkar left the meeting at 8.38pm.*

## **9. Direct Payment Support Services**

The report presented outlined the statutory duty under the Care Act (2014) to provide support services to eligible direct payment users. The service enabled vulnerable adults and children to live within their family home and maximise independence and choice of care provision. This report seeks views from Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and then subsequently Cabinet, on a proposed recommendation that the procurement for this service should go to market as an open tender.

The following points were raised:

- To ensure the right tender was agreed and not just the cheapest, the recommended rate suggested from procurement was a 60% weighting towards pricing and 40% weighting towards quality. To ensure satisfactory delivery this would be appropriately managed and monitored.
- Engagement groups/forums with all direct payment users would be used to express any displeasure or to raise any concerns.
- Members questioned the worth of the service to which it was noted in the mid £90,000.
- Members were informed this would be funded from next year's general fund budget.
- Member questioned whether there was another option, to which they were informed there was not a capacity option within the current contract to keep offering the level of service to current service users for the foreseeable future.
- Members agreed that recommendation 2 should include "in consultation with the Portfolio Holder".

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. That HOSC supported the contract to be put out to tender with no fixed price point enabling the market to price against the activities required to ensure a sustainable service for the lifetime of a contract (four + one + one years).**
- 2. That the contract be resourced to ensure statutory obligations can be appropriately met and responsibility for the awarding of any tender be delegated to the responsible Director, (Corporate Director for Adults, Housing and Health) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.**

## **10. Work Programme**

Members discussed the work programme.

The following points were agreed:

- Members agreed to establish two working groups (1) Preventive Health Care and (2) Mental Health Services starting from September 2023.
- Terms of References for these groups would be presented at the next meeting.
- Officers to meet outside this meeting to look at the work programme for future meetings and the practicality of supporting all reports.
- Members were encouraged to receive briefing notes for those items not requiring a full report.
- Other suggestions for reports were: General Practitioner Services, Access to Appointments, Cancellations and No-Shows, Dental Services, Acute Services, Advocacy Services, Alternative Services, Ambulance Service Response Times and to look at partnerships with Essex and Southend joint working groups.

## **ACTION**

5. Democratic Services to work with officers on the terms of reference outside the meeting.

The recording of the meeting can be found from the following link:

[Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Wednesday 19 July 2023, 7:00pm - Thurrock Council committee meeting webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

**The meeting finished at 9.15 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](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**