

**MINUTES OF THE EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15 MARCH 2007 AT 1.30PM
IN GROSVENOR HALL, GROSVENOR HOUSE, GLENGALL STREET, BELFAST**

PRESENT: Cllr D Curran
Cllr R Drysdale (2nd session)
Mrs E Hamilton (2nd session)
Cllr M Henderson
Cllr M Hendron
Mr J Hutchinson
Mr R Marshall

Mr J McDowell
Mrs P McGrogan
Mrs R McGrotty
Miss P McMillan
Cllr P C Mullaghan
Mr E O'Neill (2nd session)
Miss M Patterson

Miss McMillan was in the Chair

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Richard Dixon, Chief Officer
Mr Sean Brown, Senior Manager
Mrs Helen Mallen, Office Manager

23/07 APOLOGIES were received from Cllr Mrs E Campbell, Mr C Graham, Mr D Meredith and Mrs M Rooney.

Apologies were also received from Dr P Kilbane, Chief Executive, Eastern Health and Social Services Board.

24/07 CHAIRS BUSINESS EC 05/07

Miss McMillan highlighted the following in the Chair's Business:-

(a) Work Programme Sub Group, 27 February 2007

The Chair had attended the first meeting of this Sub-group, which will review the implementation and completion of the Council's Work Programme up until the dissolution of Councils in 2008.

A further two Sub Groups have been set up to deal with Complaints and Review of Public Administration. Miss McMillan thanked those members who will be sitting on all these groups for their time and contribution.

(b) EHSSB Senior Management Team Meeting, 28 February 2007

The Chair and Chief Officer attended this meeting. Issues discussed included:-

- update on recent appointments
- draft legislation for Patient Client Council (PCC)
- complaints legislation
- the opening of two new dental practices in Newtownards. Mr Will Maxwell, Director of Dental Services, EHSSB, said that they have written to patients who had been registered with Mr Bruce Kelso, the dentist who was removed from the Dental Register for serious professional misconduct, informing them that they can register as NHS patients with one of these new practices.

- (c) Community and Health Event Forum Breakfast Networking Event, 2 March 2007
An update was provided at this event on:-
- Work done so far on fuel poverty, disability, childhood obesity, Alzheimer's and community pharmacy
 - the Community Development Plan for Ards Borough Council
 - the introduction of the Smoking Ban with discussion on where health development will fit into the new South Eastern Trust structure
 - door to door transport initiative for people with disabilities living in urban areas

- (d) Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2 March 2007
Mrs McGrotty and Mrs Hamilton had also attended this meeting to discuss general entry requirements including:-
- minimum schooling
 - minimum age for selection
 - numeracy and literacy skills
 - values and people skills
 - principles and supporting guidance of selection

- (e) EHSSB Board Meeting, 8 March 2007
The issues discussed at the Board Meeting included:
- Health and Well-being Investment Plan (HWIP)
 - Reshaping of Older Peoples Services
 - Proposed fee rates for homes
- The EHSSB will reconvene their Board Meeting on 27 March 2007 to discuss their response to the Complaints and Draft Legislation consultations.

- (f) Health and Social Services Council Executive Meeting, 12 March 2007
This was the first time that the Chairs and Chief Executives had the opportunity to get an update from Dr Bernie Stuart, Director of Special Projects, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSP), since the joint Council event in the Ross-park Hotel in November 2006.

The Chair confirmed that a number of joint Council events have been organised as follows:

- 23 May 2007 in Cookstown – Dentistry and PCC, organised by NHSSC
- 25 October 2007 in Portadown – Ambulance Services/Trauma and Commissioning, organised by SHSSC
- 27 February 2008 in Lusty Beg – Final joint Council meeting to review the work of Councils, organised by WHSSC

25/07 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 15 February 2007 were agreed as a true and accurate record subject to the following changes:-
'12/07 Apologies' Cllr D Curran to be added to the list of apologies.

26/07 MATTERS ARISING

- (a) Minute 15/07 (a) Muckamore Abbey Hospital – Letter to Minister
Council had discussed the situation at Muckamore Abbey Hospital with Dr Kilbane at the council Meeting in January. At the Council Meeting in February, following an

announcement by the Minister for Health and Public Safety in relation to targets for discharge from Muckamore Abbey Hospital, it had been agreed that Council write to the Minister welcoming the recent statement and highlighting that Council would continue to monitor developments in relation to these issues.

Mr Dixon has drafted a letter to the Minister indicating that Council will maintain an interest in progress being made to ensure long-term re-settlement of patients in the community. The re-settlement process has been constantly hampered by shortages of funding and Council trusts that the Ministerial announcement will result in an appropriate and timely resettlement programme for patients.

(b) Minute 15/07 (a) Muckamore Abbey Hospital – Meeting with new Mental Health appointees

It had been agreed that Council seek meetings with the new Mental Health appointees and Mr Dixon updated members on the posts as follows:

- Northern Ireland Director of Mental Health and Learning Disability proposed by the Bamford Report – in recruitment process but no confirmation of appointment yet.
- Director of Mental Health and Learning Disability in the Belfast Trust – interviews have taken place but no appointment yet
- Regional Director of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services – not appointed yet. Mr Dixon said he needs to confirm that this is a regional post

Mr Dixon understands that Dr Bernie Stuart, DHSSPS, who is working on the set up of the PCC, will be taking on the Directorship related to Mental Health and Learning Disability at the DHSSPS. Mr Dixon will make representations to Dr Stuart who may be the person for initial engagement pending the above appointments.

(c) Minute 15/07 (a) Muckamore Abbey Hospital – Engagement with political parties during election

At the last meeting it had been suggested that Council make contact with political parties regarding the situation at Muckamore Abbey Hospital. Mr Dixon had looked into procedures for contacting political parties during an election period and explained that staff of Council are bound by Civil Service rules which discourage active involvement during an election, on the grounds that it may be seen to favour one party over another or to influence campaigning.

Mr Dixon had therefore not contacted any of the political parties. He said that now the election was over he would write to the party health spokesman within each party, expressing that Council wishes to support the resettlement programme for patients in Muckamore Abbey Hospital.

27/07 REPORT FROM CHIEF OFFICER

(a) Work Programme Sub-group meeting

The meetings of the three sub-groups for RPA, Work Programme and Complaints, have commenced. He said he will produce written reports on the progress of each group, to go out with Council papers, but provided a verbal report on progress to date as follows:

The Work Programme Sub Group met in February. This group will ensure that Council is focused on the Work Programme and clear about its objectives and will ensure delivery. Two pieces of action were agreed at the first meeting:-

- Approval to proceed to jointly commission, with the General Medical Council (GMC), some research on how patients understand the Good Medical Practice document. This document provides a description of 'what a good doctor is'. It is important to ensure that the content of this document is well understood and communicated to the public. This joint project will run between now and June 2007 with the use of focus groups, which will also contribute to the public awareness of this document.
- Facilitate training on patient public involvement (PPI). Council has been in touch with a company in Scotland who are one of the few who deliver training on PPI. Council will work with this company to provide a one-day training session on PPI in May or June 2007 in order to emphasise the need for standards, professionalism and the development a network of skilled practitioners who can deliver on engagement and consultation.

(b) Complaints Sub-group meeting

This sub-group met to discuss Council's response to the Complaints Consultation that is due in on 23 March 2007. The Chief Officer is currently drafting the response and he highlighted a number of points that will be included in the response.

The new complaints procedure proposes removing the independent review, second stage, of the process. Currently if a member of the public has a complaint with a Trust the first stage of the process is to go to them directly to see if local resolution is possible. If the Trust fails to sort the problem out locally, the member of the public can then go to the EHSSB and request an independent review. If this stage is unsuccessful the member of the public can then go to the Ombudsman.

The four Councils oppose the abolition of the Independent Review stage in the Complaints Process, in the belief that it:

- gives people fewer options in terms of support for complaints
- removes the lay and independent clinical element from the process
- sends the wrong message to the public about the health services' ability and commitment to look at issues raised in a transparent and effective way.

Councils also feel that it is inappropriate that the new Health Authority, to which Trusts will be directly accountable, is not part of the complaints process. Councils are hopeful of a change to the DHSSPS approach as it is not alone in these views.

(c) Progress on RPA

Discussions have been held about the draft legislation that is currently out for consultation, which outlines the roles and functions of organisations, including the PCC. Mr Dixon will issue members with a summary of the document, reiterating the key points. The main concerns from discussion to date are:

- Whether the power and 'teeth' required by the PCC are actually there within the legislation
- Council members will no longer be a representative forum of the EHSSB, but a management board.

A meeting of the RPA Sub-group is being arranged and this group will be involved in working towards the dissolution of Council and the set up of the new PCC.

In relation to the new Management Board set up in the PCC, Cllr Mullaghan asked how the role of 'lay representation' would be fulfilled in the new Government 'management style'.

Mr Dixon said that at the recent workshop on the legislation, there was a general concern about the 'lay representation' element. He suggested that Council might benefit from hearing from the Health Authority regarding their plans for community and public involvement in the development of health and social services. In terms of the wider structure of the health service, if the Health Authority delivers on its plans, there will be significant community and public engagement at that level.

In the new structures there is a duty to engage with communities, so Chief Executives of the new Trusts and Health Authority are obliged to produce a consultation scheme that demonstrates how the organisation will involve patients and the public in what they do on an ongoing basis.

28/07 CORRESPONDENCE PAPER EC06/07

Paper EC06/07 was taken as read and no additional items were highlighted. The Chair reminded members that if they are interested in seeing any papers listed on the monthly correspondence paper they can request these through the Council office.

29/07 INPUT FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

(a) Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2 March 2007

Mrs McGrotty and Mrs Hamilton had attended this meeting that was covered previously under Chair's Business.

(b) Trust Board Meetings

Cllr Henderson said that he has been attending the Trust Board Meetings at the Royal Group of Hospitals Trust, Mater Hospital Trust and South and East Belfast Trust. He explained that he has been given varying levels of speaking rights at these meetings but wished to highlight that he has always been made to feel welcome by the Trusts.

The Chief Officer said that the attendance of members at Trust Board Meetings has been a valuable experience and thanked members for their input and engagement at all the meetings they attend. The relationships developed at the Trust Board Meetings will be important for building relationships within the new Trusts.

(c) North and West Belfast Trust Board Meeting

Cllr Mullaghan attends the Board Meeting at North and West Belfast Trust. He said that he has been impressed with how he has been treated at these meetings. The Trust had given him speaking rights and would encourage his input to discussions.

(d) Opening of new cancer centre at Belfast City Council

Mr Marshall reported that he had received an invitation to the opening of the new cancer centre at the Belfast City Hospital, through his work on behalf of Council, with the Charitable Funds Committee. The Chair confirmed that Mr Marshall should attend on behalf of Council as he contributes a lot of work to the Hospital on Council's behalf.

30/07 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Council Staff

The Chair informed members that Miss Lynne Martin, Receptionist/Clerical Officer, with the Council, will be leaving at the end of March. In this time of change within the health service, staff have been given support as they consider their future career moves. Council will be sorry to lose Miss Martin but wish to record their thanks and best wishes for her in her new position. Miss McMillan asked members to be patient and to bear in mind that they could be dealing with agency staff in the future when contacting the office.

(b) Progress Review Meeting

The Chair confirmed that the Chief Officer and Mr Sean Brown, Senior Manager, will be attending a progress review meeting at the DHSSPS on 23 April 2007 to discuss the work of the EHSSC over the past year.

A memo had been sent to members asking them to record details of meetings they have attended, advice they have given or contacts they have made on behalf of Council in the past year. Although some members have submitted reports of meetings they have attended, Council wish to ensure that members receive the recognition for the work that they do. Members were asked to complete these forms and return them as soon as possible to Mr Sean Brown, Senior Manager.

(c) Cleanliness in hospitals and protected mealtimes

Cllr Henderson raised a number of concerns he had from recent visits to hospitals in relation to:-

•Infection control

- The use of alcohol gels and other hand washing procedures, which he did not see in practice. He had observed staff moving between patients without washing their hands
- Some reports produced on cleanliness of hospitals can be misleading, as some of the factors contributing to bad reports have been due to environmental issues relating to building structures, which are beyond the control of hospital staff.

•Mealtimes

- Hospitals had been contacted by Council some time ago in relation to protected mealtimes. However, Cllr Henderson had again witnessed problems with meals being left in front of patients or patients going for tests and not being offered meals on return.

Cllr Hendron highlighted that cleaning in wards will now be coming under the control of the Ward Sister. She asked if Council is aware if Ward Sisters will be given the resources with this power, to ensure cleanliness on their wards.

Mr Dixon said that a recent report on the incidence of MRSA had shown that Musgrave Park Hospital and the Causeway Hospital were outside the normally accepted range of incidence of MRSA. When Musgrave Park Hospital was contacted by one of the Councils, a representative had highlighted that a higher infection rate would be expected in an orthopaedic hospital where the impact on the body is greater and the clinical nature of the work and often size of wounds are all risk factors for infection.

On discussion it was agreed that the Chief Officer should raise the following issues with the Directors of Nursing and Quality in the new HPSS Trusts:-

- Use of handwashing procedures between patients
- Wearing of own clothes by doctors and wearing of uniforms outside a hospital
- Environmental cleanliness in hospitals
- Protected mealtimes

31/07 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 19 April 2007 at 5.30pm in the Link Room, The Mount Conference Centre, 2 Woodstock Link, Belfast.

The meeting closed at 2.15pm

Members joined an open session at 2.30pm, to receive presentation from Mr Colm Donaghy, Chairman of the Suicide Task Force, and to discuss the HPSS response to Suicide and Self Harm in North and West Belfast.

Signed: _____ Date _____
Chair

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chief Officer