

**MINUTES OF THE EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 19 MARCH 2009 AT 5.30PM
IN THE LAGAN ROOM, THE MOUNT CONFERENCE CENTRE,
WOODSTOCK LINK, BELFAST**

PRESENT: Mr B Compston
Cllr D Curran
Cllr R A Drysdale
Mr C Graham
Mrs E Hamilton
Cllr A Leslie
Mr R Marshall
Mrs S McGarry

Mrs P McGrogan
Mrs R McGrotty
Mr D Meredith
Mrs M Muldoon
Cllr P C Mullaghan
Miss M Patterson
Mr D Spence

Mr Graham was in the Chair

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Richard Dixon, Chief Officer
Mrs Helen Mallen, Job-Share Office Manager
Miss Samantha Lindsay, Personal Secretary
Miss Orlagh Devlin, Receptionist
Dr Paula Kilbane, Chief Executive, Eastern Health and Social Services Board
Miss Patricia McMillan
Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Campbell

24/09 WELCOME BY CHAIR

Mr Cecil Graham welcomed everyone to the final meeting of the Eastern Health and Social Services Council (EHSSC). He thanked past Council Members, Miss Patricia McMillan and Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Campbell for attending the meeting, as they had both served on Council for many years.

25/09 DR PAULA KILBANE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD (EHSSB)

Dr Kilbane said she was attending the meeting with mixed feelings as this would be the last EHSSC meeting before the EHSSC and EHSSB end their business on 31 March 2009, under Review of Public Administration arrangements. She said that she has had a long journey with the EHSSC as it has contributed to and challenged on many important issues over the years. She thanked Council Members and staff for the very positive working relationship that she and the EHSSB has had with the Council. Dr Kilbane said that Council leaves a great legacy for the incoming Patient Client Council (PCC) as it strives to strengthen the future advocacy role and public representation.

Dr Kilbane will be leaving the Board in April 2009, as will a large number of the Boards Senior Management Team, including Mrs Anne Lynch, Mr Hugh Connor, Mr Stephen Adams, Dr Stanton Adair and Mrs Mary Waddell. Dr Janet Little will also stand down from her role as Acting Director of Public Health. It is expected that Mr Colm McConville, Ms Angela Paisley, Ms Andrée McCollum and Mr Will Maxwell will be leaving later on in the year.

Mr John Compton, Chief Executive Designate of the Regional Health and Social Care Board, Mr David Bingham, Chief Executive Designate of the Regional Business Services Organisation and Dr Eddie Rooney, Chief Executive Designate of the Regional Agency for Public Health and Social Well-being have all appointed a number of Directors but some appointments have still be confirmed. The staff of the Health and Social Services Boards will be split between these three organisations.

Mrs Mary Muldoon had attended the last Board Meeting on behalf of Mr Graham. The Board is winding down, but business continuity must be preserved and Dr Kilbane outlined the following issues discussed at the last Board Meeting:-

- Finance - Mrs Angela Paisley, Director of Finance, has forecast that the EHSSB end of year accounts will balance
- Complaints - there are a number of complaints going through independent review and these will continue to conclusion. The new complaints process commences on 1 April 2009, when the Board will be removed from the complaints process, except for complaints in primary care.
- Report on Looked After Children – Mr Hugh Connor had provided a report on ‘looked after children’. He had reported that whilst there have been some advances made in looking after children with particular needs, much remains to be done to meet the needs of the growing number of children who need special levels of care.

Dr Kilbane said that the EHSSB has published a small report as a legacy of the EHSSB over its 38 year time-line. Council Members agreed that they would like copies of this report and Mrs Mallen will arrange to obtain copies for circulation.

In conclusion, Dr Kilbane said that Council Members and staff can be proud of what they have achieved, as can the staff and Members of the EHSSB.

Mr Graham thanked Dr Kilbane for her final update and said that it had been a pleasure and a privilege to have worked with her. He gave Members the opportunity to say a few words before Dr Kilbane left.

Mr Compston said that whilst he had challenged Dr Kilbane on a number of issues during Council Meetings, he recognises the significant contribution she has made. Whilst the Board and Council have shared many frustrations over the years, Dr Kilbane and her staff have attended Council Meetings to provide information and to listen to Councils concerns and Mr Compton wanted to personally thank Dr Kilbane and her staff for the support that they have provided to Council.

Cllr Leslie took the opportunity to confirm that there has been a recent announcement that there will be a health and well-being centre opened in North Down. This had been an issue he had raised at a previous Council Meeting and he said that he welcomed this announcement. He paid tribute to the hard work and achievements of Dr Kilbane and thanked her for attending the Council Meetings to provide an opportunity for questions and debate.

As this is the last Minute of the EHSSC the Chair said he and the Chief Officer will sign off the final minutes. Mr Graham said he wanted Councils thanks to Dr Kilbane on record. He said that Members had expressed a glowing and honest tribute to Dr Kilbane on behalf of the EHSSC. Dr Kilbane was Chief Executive of the Southern

Health and Social Services Board before joining the Eastern Board as Chief Executive. Mr Graham said that the Government has recently recognised her contribution to the public health administration in Northern Ireland when they made her a Commander of the British Empire.

On behalf of the EHSSC, Mr Graham presented a Certificate to Dr Kilbane in recognition of the working relationship that she and the EHSSB have had with the Council from 1991-2009.

On behalf of the staff of the EHSSC, Mr Dixon thanked Dr Kilbane and her team for the support that the Council always received from the EHSSB. Mr Dixon joined the Council four years ago and said that he has been impressed by the professionalism and expertise of the staff that have always provided assistance and advice when needed. In tribute to Dr Kilbane and her senior team he noted the professionalism, commitment and profound sense of care for the public they serve in his contact and dealings with them in the past four years.

Before leaving the meeting Dr Kilbane thanked Council again and wished Members and staff well for the future.

26/09 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the two previous Council Meetings held on Thursday 15 January 2009 and Thursday 19 February 2009 were agreed as an accurate record, signed by the Chair and witnessed by the Chief Officer.

27/09 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

- (a) Minute 12/09 Purchase of equipment from voluntary funds
Mr Graham said this issue is still a matter in progress. This had been raised by the Chair who had been approached in relation to the purchase of equipment with money raised from a fund-raising event. It would appear that the money raised, although given to a Trust as a gift for specific equipment, has been encompassed in a tendering process which has delayed the purchase.
- (b) Minute 74/08 (b) Progress of Midwifery Led Unit (MLU) Downe Hospital
Cllr Curran confirmed that the new Downe Hospital will open in June 2009. He said that Council had made a substantial contribution to the planning for the hospital through Committee representation in the past.
- (c) Minute 74/08 (j) Issues Regarding NI Ambulance Service (NIAS)
Mr Dixon confirmed that NIAS had now responded to a letter forwarded by the Chief Officer in relation to an issue raised at the Council Meeting in October 2009 by Miss Muriel Patterson. It related to transport of patients between hospitals for an urgent outpatient appointment, whilst a patient is an inpatient. A copy of the response letter had been circulated to Members and Mr Dixon said that the response from NIAS sought to assure Members. Mr Graham confirmed that a detailed response to the NIAS development plans has been submitted by Council.

28/09 INPUT FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

- (a) **Members representation on Committees**
Mr Marshall said he welcomed Mr Dixon's letter confirming that he had written to those organisations and Committees that EHSSC Members attend on behalf of Council. The letter had confirmed that representation will cease on 31 March 2009 in keeping with the end of EHSSC business.

Miss Patterson confirmed she had also advised the Committee she sits on directly.

Mr Dixon informed Members that some Members from other HSS Councils have been asked to remain as Committee representatives in an individual capacity after 1 April 2009. This is an individual decision for Members if they get a request to continue.

- (b) **Best Wishes**
A number of Members took the opportunity to wish Members and staff well for the future. Mrs McGarry wished everyone every success for the future. Mrs Hamilton said it had been a privilege to be part of the Council and commended everyone for the tremendous achievement over the years. She thanked Mr Dixon and his staff for all their work and support.
- (c) **Antimicrobial Resistant Action Plan Working Group**
Mrs Hamilton said she had attended a meeting of this Group. The Minutes of this meeting are available on the DHSSPS website. Mrs Hamilton will be attending a workshop next week on Healthcare Associated Infections. There is a new strategy called 'Changing the Culture 2009-2011' and this will be discussed at the workshop.
- (d) **Patients in Practice Seminar, 29 January 2009**
Mrs McGrotty had attended this seminar that had been arranged by the Royal College of GPs'. There had been two very good presentations. One by Sue Kinsley, Scottish Patient Participation Group (PPG), who had highlighted the importance of have PPGs' in surgeries and the beneficial work that can be done by involving patients. The other presentation was from Dr Jenny McCaughey who had explained the working of the PPG in her practice that has been running for eight years.
- (e) **East Local Commissioning Group (LCG) meeting**
Mrs McGrotty had attended this meeting where Mr Michael Bloomfield, DHSSPS, had spoken about a paper on the management of transition to Phase 2 Organisations and There was also discussion about outstanding issues.
- (f) **EHSSB, 12 March 2009**
Mrs Muldoon had attended the EHSSB Board Meeting on behalf of Council. She had taken the opportunity to give thanks to the Board for the help and encouragement they have given to the Council over many years.

Mr Graham thanked Members for their contribution on Committees on behalf of the EHSSC. He gave particular thanks to Mrs Muldoon who had deputised on his behalf on a number of occasions. He thanked Council Members, past and present, for the time they have given in providing a patient and client voice at the various meetings attended and representation carried out.

29/09 CHAIR'S REPORT

(a) Final Joint Council Forum, 26th and 27th February 2009

Mr Graham thanked Members for the turnout at the final Joint Council Forum in the Slieve Donard Hotel in February 2009. The Chair said that whilst Members had appreciated the attendance of Dr Andrew McCormick, Permanent Secretary, on behalf of the Minister for Health, it was disappointing that Mr Michael McGimpsey could not attend himself to give recognition to the volunteer contribution by the four Councils'. Members agreed.

(b) Patient Client Council (PCC)

Mr Graham said that whilst the Chair, Chief Executive and Senior Management levels of the PCC have been appointed, there have been no details yet of the Members appointed. It would appear that none of the current Council Members have been appointed to the successor body and the Chair said that this was disappointing as it would have provided some continuity.

The Chair said it was also disappointing to see what appears to be the reduction in the status of the local offices and the downgrading of some of the current staff.

30/09 CHIEF OFFICERS REPORT

A paper had been circulated at the meeting providing a final report of work to be completed before 31 March 2009. Mr Dixon outlined the two areas of work and asked for Members endorsement so that the Chair and he can take these forward on behalf of Council in the short remaining time of operation of the EHSSC. Members agreed that the Chair and Chief Officer should complete the following:

(a) The 'Respect Agenda'

Following the attendance of Mr Martin Bradley, Chief Nursing Officer for NI, at the Council Meeting in February 2009, the Chair will write to him in support of the 'Respect Agenda' and copy the letter to the Chief Medical Officer, Permanent Secretary and the Minister for Health. The letter will endorse:-

- Support for the agenda as a whole and for its pursuit through the inclusion of relevant targets within Priorities for Action
- Support for the concept that ward managers in acute hospitals should be absolutely empowered to take responsibility for all that happens on their respective wards and to take immediate action to address any deficiency.
- Suggest that the agenda should be pursued further through workforce planning which should clearly and explicitly take account of the need for health and care staff to be given sufficient time to offer humane and compassionate care and to establish effective and supportive communication with patients and relatives.

b) Community based care planning

Mr Dixon said that the proposals made are in response to a paper presented to Members by Mr Raymond Newman, Senior Manager, on the Complaints Advocacy Service. This paper had highlighted that lack of care plans in the community settings appear to be a factor in several complaints that the EHSSC had been asked to assist with.

It was proposed that the Chair and Chief Officer will make representation to the Director of Primary Care at the DHSSPS, to recommend that she commission a thorough review of the quality of care planning in community settings in response to concerns raised by complainants and members of the public. Mr Dixon highlighted that this is particularly important at this time as through the Reform and Modernisation agenda, the public are being asked to accept that forms of care can be better provided for them at home or in communities than it can be in hospitals or facilities such as residential and nursing homes. Based on a number of meetings Members and the Chief Officer have attended, the public are sceptical at the ability of community based care to adequately care for their needs at home.

It is essential that an individuals community care plan must always be present and known to the service user so that they know what they should be expecting in terms of the service they should be receiving and who they should contact if they are not.

In terms of the health service providers, if everyone has a proper recorded community care plan, that is reviewed and reported on, they can tell the public that they are monitoring these standards and that they know what is going on in clients' homes when they send their staff in and that adequate resources are available.

(c) Priorities for Action for recommendation to the PCC

Based on work carried out by the HSSCs'. Mr Dixon said that the HSSC Executive Committee will sign off a report recommending to the PCC that they take the following themes forward as part of their workplan:-

- Advocacy for older people in residential and nursing care homes
- Continued monitoring of the implementation of Reform and Modernisation, the shift from hospital to community based care.
- Establishment of appropriate complaints advocacy service for prisoners
- Regional involvement with the public on the targets and priorities set for their care

Mr Dixon said he wanted to thank Mr Graham as Chair and Miss McMillan as our previous Chair, for their support and encouragement over his four years in post. He said as a group of Members they have shown thorough commitment in ensuring that patients are listened to, are represented on committees and appear on organisational structures. He said he has appreciated the strengths and skills of each Member, the support of the two Chairs and the freedom they have given him to do his job to the best of his ability. He wished the Patient Client Council every success for the future as it continues and develops its role.

Mr Graham said that this final report outlined two very important issues that Council will need to complete work on by 31 March 2009. He sought Members endorsement of the proposals made and proposed that the EHSSC issue a press release outlining the final business it has taken on these issues. Members agreed.

31/09 CORRESPONDENCE – PAPER EC 03/09

Paper EC03/09 was taken as read, with no additional items being discussed. Members were advised to telephone the office as soon as possible if they were interested in requesting any of the documents itemised.

32/09 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Ravara House

Cllr Leslie confirmed that Ravara House in Bangor will now not be closed as proposed. He had objected to this closure and thanked Council for its input into the debate about closure, specifically asking about alternatives for the residents.

Mr Dixon confirmed that the Minister has issued two press releases, one giving a commitment that facilities would not be closed until it could be clearly demonstrated that at least as good as, if not better, alternative services were in place. The second press release was the announcement confirming that there would be a Midwifery Led Unit (MLU) in the Downe Hospital.

(b) Point of note

Cllr Leslie said that at the Joint Council Forum in the Slieve Donard, one of the group feedback sessions had referred to a comment by one of the Members 'not to trust politicians'. Cllr Leslie said he wished it to be noted that he took exception to this statement and disassociated himself from it. He said he personally works hard as an elected representative as do many others.

Mr Graham said this had been fed back at one of the sessions and said he was sure that this was a point of view expressed by someone and that he was sure that no-one intended to cause offence.

(c) Legacy Issues

Miss Patricia McMillan said that before she became a Council Member, she was actually the first Member of the public to be accorded speaking rights and she now as the last.

Miss McMillan paid tribute to the Members and said that she recognises their input to meetings and representation, which also takes their time for preparation that cannot be underestimated. She said that during her time with Council she always found whilst representing Council, that the Professionals she came in contact with valued her input. Miss McMillan said that the EHSSC has made an impact and that a small number of people have made a big difference in patient care. She took the opportunity to wish the Members and staff well for the future and wished the PCC every success.

(d) Transfer of client files

In response to a query from Mr Marshall in relation to the transfer of client files from the EHSSC to the PCC, Mr Dixon confirmed that the PCC will assume the legal responsibility of the EHSSC files. As the PCC will have the full duty of providing a confidential service the transfer should be seamless from the client point of view.

Mr Dixon said that it will be business as usual on 1 April 2009. The new management will work to establish the new organisation whilst maintaining the quality of the service and confidentiality provided to complainants to date.

(e) Thanks to speakers

Cllr Mullaghan said that part of the legacy of the EHSSC will be the quality of the presentations by Council and guest speakers. He said recognition must be given to the speakers who have attended Council Meetings to discuss, debate and answer questions

about various issues. This included senior people from the Eastern Board and DHSSPS.

(f) On closure

Mr Meredith said that he wanted to mention the help provided to the EHSSC by the agency staff and gave special thanks to Miss Lindsay and Miss Devlin for their front-line support during often challenging times.

Mr Graham wished the staff every success for their future careers and reaffirmed his thanks to the Members. He said it was his privilege to have worked with the other Council Members.

Signed: _____ Date _____
Chair

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chief Officer