

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 2 February 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee held at
Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall on Wednesday, 2 February 2022 at 11.00
am

Present

Members:

Michael Hudson (Chairman)
Wendy Mead (Deputy Chairman)
Vivienne Littlechild
Andrew Mayer
Deputy Barbara Newman
Steve Stevenson

Officers:

Kate Bygrave	- Community and Children's Services Department
Simon Cribbens	- Community and Children's Services Department
Ben Dunleavy	- Town Clerk's Department
Chris Lovitt	- Community and Children's Services Department
Charlie Pearce	- Chief Operating Officer's Department
Ian Tweedie	- Community and Children's Services Department
Ellie Ward	- Community and Children's Services Department

Also in attendance:

Patrick Brooks	- London Ambulance Service
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1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

The following declarations were made:

- Barbara Newman
- Vivienne Littlechild;
- Steve Stevenson;

all declared that they were resident in the City and patients of the Neaman Practice.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that - the public minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising:

Members discussed outstanding items from the previous meeting, and agreed that Outstanding Actions should be added as a standing agenda item for future meetings.

4. **WORKPLAN**

Members noted the suggested topics for the Committee's meetings in 2022, and discussed several items to be allocated to upcoming meetings.

5. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE - EARLY INTERVENTION/PREVENTION**

Members received an oral update from the Head of Service, Adult Social Care relative to the early intervention and prevention.

Members expressed concern that it was difficult to return equipment that had been provided. Officers responded to say that they understood the frustration. Equipment could be provided from various sources, and that it was sometimes not clear to the Social Care team what was provided. There are currently ongoing discussions on this issue.

Officers undertook to look into what solutions could be found for processing equipment that was no longer necessary.

A Member asked why the pilot stage of this project had only now been started, given that the changes stemmed from the Care Act 2014. In reply, an Officer said that the Care Act came into effect in 2015, and Adult Social Care had been working within its parameters since then. The new pilot is a way to look at new methods of operating.

In response to a question about what failure of the pilot would look like, an Officer replied that they would be considering various factors, but the crucial factor was wellbeing. If the pilot had not improved this, it would be considered to have failed.

RESOLVED, that – the presentation be received and its contents noted.

6. **HEALTH INEQUALITY STEERING GROUP UPDATE**

Members received an oral update from the Deputy Director of Public Health relative to the work of the City & Hackney Health Inequality Steering Group.

RESOLVED, that – the update be received, and a further update brought to the Committee in a year's time.

7. **AMBULANCE SERVICES**

Members received an oral update from the London Ambulance Service (LAS) NHS Trust Stakeholder Engagement Manager relative to the work of the London Ambulance Service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Member asked if ambulance crews would refer to social services elderly patients who had fallen but who had no broken bones or head injuries. In reply, the Stakeholder Engagement Manager confirmed that they would refer the patient to social services, particularly if there were safeguarding concerns.

A Member asked how ambulance crews decide which hospital to take patients to. In reply, the Stakeholder Engagement Manager said that ambulances primarily use an onboard computer which calculates the nearest location. A tactical operation centre monitors patient flow and can divert to the most suitable sites. Where clinically appropriate, ambulance crew will take patient preference into consideration, but if time is critical, patients are taken to the nearest hospital regardless of that delays at that hospital or the patients choice. If GPs have specified a place of care for a patient, LAS is duty-bound to take that into consideration.

A Member asked for information on the current staff retention rate. In reply, the Stakeholder Engagement Manager said that it is currently challenging. They are recruiting large numbers of staff from Australia, as that is the country with the closest skill set to LAS's current scope of practice. A new training centre has been established to train associate ambulance practitioners to support paramedics. In terms of retention of domestic staff, Members heard that LAS has a young workforce with high staff turnover. The current term of service is around three years, which is a decrease from previously. Current recruitment policy is focused on attracting Londoners who are more likely to remain in London, as LAS has seen a trend of staff moving to London when young, and then leaving as they age due to the capital's cost of living.

The Chairman asked how the reduction of working ambulance stations had improved efficiency during the pandemic. In reply, the Stakeholder Engagement Manager said that they had focused on the utilisation of staff and the time spent preparing vehicles by only keeping larger stations open, and keeping staff and vehicles at these.

8. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

A Member said that she had found it difficult to reach the Neaman Practice by phone. In reply, an Officer reported the Practice had been undergoing work on their technological capacity.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

Members received an update on COVID-19 from [Chris Lovitt].

The Chairman informed Members that he had received a report from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on Turning Point, the provider for the City of London and Hackney's substance misuse service, in which the service was [marked as 'needs improvement']. The Town Clerk undertook to circulate the report to all Members after the meeting.

The Chairman announced that this was the last meeting of the current Court, and thanked Members for their service and Officers for their support.

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm

Chairman

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Ben

Dunleavy