

Minutes of the Meeting of the Extraordinary Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 5 December 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Victoria Holloway (Chair), John Allen (Vice-Chair), Cathy Kent, Elizabeth Rigby (arrived at 7.06pm), Joycelyn Redsell and Alex Anderson (substitute for Tom Kelly)

Kim James, Healthwatch Thurrock Representative
Neil Woodbridge, Chief Executive Officer, Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions

Apologies: Councillor Tom Kelly and Ian Evans, Thurrock Coalition

In attendance: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health
Ian Wake, Director of Public Health
Tom Abell, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Transformation Officer, Basildon & Thurrock Hospital Trusts
Jo Cripps, Mid & South Essex STP
Claire Hankey, Mid & South Essex STP
Jeanette Hucey, Director of Transformation, Clinical Commissioning Group
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.

35. Urgent Items

No matters of urgent business were received.

36. Declarations of Interests

No interests were declared.

37. Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) - Orsett Hospital

The Chair read out the following statement:

“One item on the agenda this evening which was to formalise the decision from the committee's last meeting to refer the STP plan to the Secretary of State on two grounds. The closure of Orsett Hospital was not in the interests of health services in Thurrock and the consultation process which resulted in the decision to close the hospital was not adequate.

As a committee we have continued to worry about these issues in particular. Having discussed the plan over many months it had become inevitable that in

order to properly ensure the interests of Thurrock residents and the future of the right health services we should refer the decision for further scrutiny to the Secretary of State.

I believe it was important that as a committee, indeed cross party as a Council we wholeheartedly support four new Integrated Medical Centres. We want new health centres and facilities to support the health needs of our residents. This was not a question.

We know both Councillors and Officers however that at the moment these centres do not exist. We know that building these centres involve a number of partners to agree, a number of planning issues to be resolved, ultimately many elements falling into place all at the same time. It may be that every single element of the very long to do list that needs to be in place to ensure four centres come through. But it would be irresponsible of us as Councillors not to think about what happens if all of these centres are not built. This was not explained to residents in the consultation. They believe all of them will be built without question however sadly we have experienced here in Thurrock of promises of new health facilities which progress well until they are pulled at the last minute. In the meantime, Orsett Hospital will slowly be shutting down and what happens to services in the hospital when there are not four centres to put them in.

The decision to close Orsett Hospital was one not only based on the consideration of the development of health facilities in the area. The underlying reason was a lack of investment which meant Orsett Hospital was not up to the standards we want in a hospital. The Deputy Chief Executive of BTUH had acknowledged the lack of money to this committee when he explained the hospital must close. How can a decision be based on this reason be to the benefit of health services for Thurrock residents.

Over the years, for some Councillors and months for others, the concerns about the consultation have been raised regularly. There have been a number of minutes reflecting these concerns. Sadly they have not all been included in the pack. Councillor Redsell I remember you particularly raising concern regarding a meeting in your ward that you did not know about. You were rightly concerned about how widely the notice the meeting had been circulated. In addition HealthWatch raised serious reservations which had not been included in the pack provided to Members from a meeting held on the 18 January this year.

On page 17 of tonight's report it states that 276 submitted a specific consultation questionnaire distributed in Thurrock. The specific questionnaire was only received mid-February. What might that number have been if we had that questionnaire throughout the whole consultation period?

Therefore this decision requires referral. I am aware that we have all already agreed to take this forward and ask Members for their comments before formally voting".

Councillor C Kent stated her support to the referral to the Secretary of State by stating the consultation process had been inadequate with late notice being given of consultation events, those questions raised by residents appeared to be unwelcomed, the on-line consultation was unavailable to many Thurrock residents and had been excluded from the consultation as they had no access to this facility. Councillor C Kent stated that the forecasted increase in Thurrock population with new homes and infrastructure being built in Thurrock there was no confidence the four Integrated Medical Centres could support all the services currently at Orsett Hospital.

Councillor Redsell stated she was not in agreement with the referral to the Secretary of State as this would delay the process of opening the four Integrated Medical Centres. The need for the four Integrated Medical Centres was vital so the services currently at Orsett Hospital could be spread out making it easier for residents as currently the hospital was not close to everyone. Councillor Redsell stated the current services would not cope with the future demand and planned developments in the borough.

The Chair stated her disappointment in the choice to not refer this matter bearing in mind the concerns raised up to this point.

Councillor Rigby echoed Councillor Redsell's comments that the referral to the Secretary of State would only delay the opening of the four Integrated Medical Centres.

Councillor Allen stated the four Integrated Medical Centres were a good idea providing services closer to residents and stated he was not in agreement that Orsett Hospital should close. Councillor Allen stated the borough needed its own hospital and questioned whether the opening of hubs by 2021 was now ambitious.

Roger Harris stated it was ambitious and increasingly unlikely the hubs would open by 2021. The referral recently made by Southend on Sea Council had already added a further six months onto the process. Roger Harris reassured Members that although health partners would not be agreeing or signing any agreements the planning work would continue.

Ian Wake stated that the current design and specification for the four Integrated Medical Centres had been based on the assumption that Orsett Hospital would close and that services provided from it would be migrated into the Integrated Medical Centres. It was stated could not have both the Integrated Medical Centres and Orsett Hospital. In response to Councillor Allen question on whether Thurrock should have its own hospital; Ian Wake stated that the optimum way of delivering future health services for Thurrock residents should include the integration of hospital diagnostic and outpatient services within the new Integrated Medical Centres and the rationalisation of specialist services such as cardio-vascular, stroke and cancer services on fewer sites in order to create specialist centres of excellence that could provide 24/7 specialist care.

Councillor Anderson also echoed Councillor Redsell's comments that the referral to the Secretary of State would delay the opening of the four Integrated Medical Centres.

The Chair questioned why following the undertaking of more financial investigation that having both the Orsett Hospital and the four Integrated Medical Centres was now not an option, the Integrated Medical Centres were planned to happen with no dependence on the other and asked if this was not now the case.

Ian Wake stated since the clinical model was proposed more time had allowed for a further detailed financial analysis and it was clear that it was more affordable to have the services in the four Integrated Medical Centres.

The Chair stated this was brand new information to Members and very upsetting to hear.

Councillor Allen stated he was in favour of the referral to the Secretary of State.

The Chair asked Members to vote on recommendation 1.1 with three Members voting in favour and three Members abstaining.

The Chair asked Members to vote on recommendations 1.2 and 1.3 with Members voting in favour.

The Chair announced that the STP will now be referred to the Secretary of State and stated a formal letter be prepared by officers outlining the basis of the referral. This letter would then need to be shared with STP colleagues to comment and that the IRP would also be asked to comment. All Members agreed the letter should be signed off by the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Chair asked the letter be available as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

- 1. Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Members considered whether there was sufficient evidence to refer the decision of the CCG Joint Committee to transfer services out of Orsett Hospital, to the Secretary of State on the following grounds:**
 - That they consider the consultation exercise inadequate.**
 - That they consider the proposal not in the interests of health services in Thurrock.**

- 2. Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Members noted the timetable detailed within the report.**

3. **Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Members agreed that a copy of the final response was shared with the STP before final submission.**

The meeting finished at 7.23 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**