

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee**
held on Thursday, 12th December, 2024 in the Council Chamber, Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

Councillor L Wardlaw (Chair)

Councillors S Adams, N Cook, H Seddon, M Sewart, J Snowball, S Corcoran
and L Anderson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Brian Reed – Head of Democratic Services
Jennifer Ashley – Democratic Services Officer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Matthew Cunningham - Associate Director of Corporate Affairs & Governance,
Cheshire & Merseyside NHS
Nicola Biggar - Head of Midwifery, East Cheshire NHS Trust
Chris Knights – Programme Director, Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation
Trust
Ian Moses- Area Director, Northwest Ambulance Service
Dave Kitchen, Cheshire & Merseyside Head of Operations
Graham Pacey, Cheshire & Merseyside South Sector Manager
Maud Larkin, Cheshire & Merseyside Partnerships & Integration Manager

24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Craig Browne,
David Brown, Brian Drake, Margaret Simon, John Smith and Rob Veron.

25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In the interest of openness, Councillor Wardlaw declared she occasionally
worked for the Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust as
a nurse in the Congleton area.

26 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2024 be approved
as a correct record.

27 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

Mr Gavin Palin attended the meeting and provided a statement relating to his role as Community First Responder and Emergency Medical Technician (1) working for Northwest Ambulance Service (NWAS).

Mr Palin provided details of his experience with NWAS and the training and qualifications he had undertaken. Information was also provided to the committee regarding Mr Palin having 'blue light permissions' removed from him.

28 PROPOSED CHANGES TO NHS FUNDED GLUTEN FREE PRESCRIBING

The committee received a report from the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB) that informed the Committee that at the ICB meeting on 28 November 2024, the ICB approved the recommendation that the ICB commences a period of public consultation regarding the proposal to cease NHS funded gluten free prescribing (bread and bread mixes) across Cheshire and Merseyside.

The ICB had a duty to engage with Local Authority Health and Overview Scrutiny Committees (HOSC) to seek confirmation as to whether the HOSC believed the proposals constituted a substantial change to NHS services, known as a Substantial Development of Variation of Services (SDV).

The committee were informed that currently across Cheshire and Merseyside there are differences in the prescribing availability of gluten free products for patients due to previous arrangements of the individual predecessor Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) organisations. Work has been undertaken to rectify this position and recommend a harmonised approach to gluten free prescribing.

Following discussions, Councillor Corcoran proposed that the proposals did not constitute a Substantial Development of Variation of Service. Councillor Sewart seconded the motion. The committee voted 3 for the proposal, 4 against. Therefore the motion was lost.

Councillor Adams proposed that the proposals did constitute a Substantial Development of Variation of Service. Councillor Cook seconded the motion. The committee voted 4 for the proposal, 3 against.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee **AGREED** that the proposals represented a substantial development or variation to services.

That the Committee NOTED that subject to the decision of the Cheshire East Council's Scrutiny Committee and that of the other seven Local Authority HOSC's that NHS Cheshire and Merseyside will inform and / or consult with the relevant health scrutiny arrangements on the consultation and its outcome.

That the Committee AGREED to delegate authority to the Head of Democratic Services, in consultation with the Chair, to make appointments to the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee if the matter arises.

29 MACCLESFIELD DISTRICT GENERAL HOSPITAL INTRAPARTUM MATERNITY SERVICES: POST IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Midwifery, East Cheshire NHS Trust that provided details of a review of services since the implementation of Intrapartum Maternity Services at Macclesfield District General Hospital from June 2023. The presentation captured the significant programme of work undertaken that led up to the return of services and set out the key lessons learned to inform future service changes.

The Committee were informed of the significant programme of works that had been undertaken that led to the return of services and the key lessons learned that would inform future service changes.

Board members, staff, partners, key stakeholders and patient representatives were involved in the Post Implementation Review which had taken place three months after the return of services. It was highlighted to Members that the return of intrapartum maternity services after a significant suspension was great news for current and future expectant women. Feedback regarding the implementation process had been broadly positive and has helped to shape future projects.

The Committee were also advised that following an inspection from the CQC in December 2023, one area identified as requiring improvement was 'Safe' which related to adequate staff being available for specialist areas. It was noted that the data provided to the CQC and the way it had been interpreted resulted in this rating, however, it was confirmed that there were minimal vacancies across the service with Maternity Anaesthetic provision stable and a priority. In addition there is a small team that share lead roles working to National Standards.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation and report be noted.

30 LEIGHTON HOSPITAL EXPANSION PROGRAMME

The committee received a presentation from Chris Knights, Programme Director, New Hospital Programme, that provided details of the proposed

plans to rebuild Leighton Hospital. With the current site having a number of infrastructure issues, the site had been identified as requiring replacement and investment to ensure health provisions can continue.

Details of the preferred way forward and plans of the hospital were shared with the committee, and it was noted the plan would follow a national design known as 'Hospital 2.0' which is a standardised repeatable design which is consistent across all new hospital construction. The new design would bring a number of efficiencies and improvements for patient care.

Members were informed of the ambitious timetable for completion of the project, with outline planning applications to be submitted in April 2025, with a view to commence construction in winter 2026 and completion in 2030.

Members had a full discussion regarding the plans and were pleased to hear of the digital transformation that is also to be included within the project. Some concerns were raised regarding all wards containing single rooms for patients, however, it was noted that the intention was to assist with infection prevention and control, and patient wellbeing would still be a priority to help reduce and issues with isolation.

RESOLVED:

That the committee noted the contents of the presentation.

31 NORTHWEST AMBULANCE SERVICE

Ian Moses , Cheshire and Merseyside Area Director, Dave Kitchen, Cheshire and Merseyside Head of Operations, Graham Pacey, Cheshire and Merseyside South Sector Manager and Maud Larkin, Cheshire and Merseyside Partnerships and Integration Manager attended the meeting and delivered a presentation which provided an overview of the performance of the North-West Ambulance Services NHS Trust to date in 2024.

The committee were provided with activity data for the whole of the Cheshire and Merseyside area, alongside specific data for the South Sector for which Cheshire East sits. Although there had been a decrease in the number of calls received and incidents attended across the South Sector, there were still some concerns over handover times at hospitals, however Leighton Hospital was noted as one of the hospitals which had significantly improved their processes for the admittance of patients.

NWAS had benefited from additional funding investment which had resulted in an additional 850 ambulance hours per week now being available.

The committee discussed the work of Community First Responders (CFR) and the important role they play in assisting NWAS within local communities. It was noted that due to a change in NHS driving standards, driving with blue light permissions had been removed from a number of CFR's.

It was noted that staff retention levels were good, and that due to the various training options for becoming a Paramedics this was helping to bring more people into roles within NWAS and the NHS.

The committee were informed that incidents of violence towards NWAS staff was still a concern, and was one of the top 2 reasons for work related injuries. The service now employed a specialist member of staff to train NWAS workers on technics for disengagement and escape. In addition, body worn cameras were issued to all frontline staff.

RESOLVED:

That the committee noted the content of the presentation.

32 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The committee considered the work programme.

RESOLVED:

- The Scrutiny Committee scheduled for 13 March 2025 would be a single item agenda focusing on Flood Risk Management
- That an item be added to the work programme in relation to Housing Providers and the services they provide across Cheshire East
- That an item be added to the work programme in relation to Suicide Prevention and the support available
- That Chair of the Committee agree with Democratic Services the appropriate timeframes for items to be presented.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 1.35 pm

Councillor L Wardlaw (Chair)