
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 OCTOBER 2014

Present: Councillors Stevens (Chair), Bogle, Claisse, Mintoff, Noon, Baillie and Smith

Apologies: Councillors White and Parnell

18. **APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

It was noted that following receipt of the temporary resignations of Councillors White and Parnell from the Panel, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, acting under delegated powers, had appointed Councillors Baillie and Smith to replace them for the purposes of this meeting.

19. **BITTERNE WALK-IN CENTRE**

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive of the City Council setting out information relating to the Bitterne Walk-in Centre.

The Panel received a presentation from representatives of the Southampton Clinical Commissioning Group and Solent NHS Trust detailing proposals for supporting primary care and increasing community nursing to better meet the needs of the most vulnerable patients, especially the elderly, in their own homes across Southampton. The proposals detailed plans to run a trial for a 6 month period commencing in December 2014 and involved the temporary closure of the Bitterne Walk-in-Centre (BWIC).

Rowena Davis, Phil Wood, Tom Doak, Ben Hibbert, Kim Rose, Councillor LLOYD and Mike Simpson were in attendance and, with the consent of Chair addressed the meeting.

A number of issues were discussed at the meeting including:

- how the diversion funding from the BWIC to the community nursing and community health care will better address the needs and requirements of the most vulnerable patients in the City;
- the financial costings of the BWIC and how the funding available for the pilot would be made available for the temporary period;
- the merits of undertaking a pilot that tested whether the provision of community care could be improved by diversion of funding that became available with the temporary closure of the BWIC prior to any consultation on the future of the service;
- difficulties with gaining a same day appointment at GP surgeries within the Eastern part of the City and how the pilot was aimed to free up GP time and availability to relieve this problem. The Panel noted the growing demand on GP and Nursing services with population growth;
- the geographical nature of health provision in the City including the disparity of services available within the Eastern areas and the proportion of residents on a low income and without the necessary means to transport themselves to other parts of the City to visit health facilities;

- concerns that with the closure of the BWIC residents will seek treatment from an inappropriate provider and add to the pressures upon the City's emergency departments.
- the importance of communicating the correct care pathways and advice to residents in order for them to more readily access the correct services efficiently. The Panel were told that the emergency telephone number 111 had proved to be very effective within the City and across Hampshire. It was stated at the meeting that those needing care often found themselves misdirected by their own previous experience and that instead of sourcing the most appropriate pathway they followed the same route into gaining care. The Panel were informed that the communication plans were robust and aimed to redirect patients through the 111 number to the most correct place for care;
- the development of the Pilot had resulted from consultations with the main health providers in the City including University Hospitals Southampton;
- the practicalities of holding a meaningful consultation within a period that included the Christmas holidays and prior to a general election.

RESOLVED that the Panel:

- (i) noted that there were opportunities for improvement to the provision of community health care services that did not rely on the release of funding made available from the temporary closure of the Bitterne Walk-in-Centre; and
- (ii) recommended that the Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group and the Solent NHS Health Trust do not change the provision of services through the Bitterne Walk-in-Centre prior to a meaningful consultation with residents and that due care should be taken to ensure that the practicalities of holding a meaningful consultation within a period that included the Christmas holidays and prior to a general election.