

FOR: COUNCIL MEETING

14th APRIL 2015

AGENDA ITEM 8

(GREEN ENCLOSURE)

REPORT OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMUNITY, HOUSING AND HEALTH (OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE

PRESENT:

Councillors Marshall (Chairman), Warfield (Vice Chairman), Mrs Woodward (Vice-Chairman), Evans, Salter and Tittley.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: were received from Councillors Mrs Allsopp, Mrs Bacon, Mrs Bland, Humphreys, Mrs Flowith and Taylor.

(In accordance with Council Procedure No. 17 Councillor Greatorex also attended the meeting.)

County Councillor David Smith also attended the meeting as the County Council's representative from the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee

Also Present:

Dr Ken Deacon – NHS England

Mrs Wilkins – Patient Participation Group

At the meeting of the Community, Housing and Health (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee held on 25th March 2015 the following matters were considered:

1. HEALTH ISSUES

(a) Proposed Closure of a Branch Surgery

- 1.1 The Chairman introduced and welcomed Dr Ken Deacon from NHS England. The Chairman referred to the meeting held on 3rd February 2015, which had been convened in order to consult with patients about the proposed closure of Dr Rasib's branch surgery in Burntwood. He had been led to understand that the meeting had been very heated and confrontational and that unfortunately the behaviour of some elected Members had exacerbated the situation. The matter is to be investigated by the District Council's Monitoring Officer, but it was hoped that this unfortunate incident had not soured relations with NHS England (NHSE). On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Dr Deacon for giving up his time to attend the Overview and Scrutiny meeting. Councillor Mrs Woodward supported the Chairman's comments and noted that local politicians had been invited to the consultation meeting and therefore it had become more politically charged event. However, this most certainly did not excuse the poor behaviour which took place. Councillor Mrs Evans had attended the meeting and she concurred with the points made regarding the event's confrontational nature and questioning of NHSE officers.
- 1.2 The Chairman gave Mrs Wilkins from the Patient Participation Group (PPG) an opportunity to address the Committee. She proceeded to report that it was the PPG

which had instigated the consultation meeting, not Dr Rasib, and the unexpectedly high number of attendees perhaps served to demonstrate the patients' concerns surrounding the proposed closure of the surgery.

- 1.3 Dr Deacon then outlined the report and noted that, on February 25th, NHSE had again received an application from Dr Rasib to close the branch surgery located at Cannock Road, Burntwood. It was reported that this was a resubmitted application, originally having been rejected by NHSE due to there having been a lack of any evidence to suggest the statutory consultation with patients had occurred. This had been rectified with the PPG meeting on the 3rd February 2015. Dr Deacon confirmed that despite this meeting not having been convened by Dr Rasib personally, it was deemed sufficient to meet NHSE's criteria to show consultation had taken place.
- 1.4 It was then reported that Dr Rasib was a single-handed GP with responsibility for 8190 patients involving two practices situated at Cannock and Burntwood. Although he had secured long term locums at the Cannock site, providing similar cover at Burntwood had proved extremely difficult to effect. It was also reported that when independently surveyed, the Burntwood surgery was deemed to be in very poor condition. It was reported that there was capacity at neighbouring surgeries to incorporate patients from Dr Rasib's practice, and for these reasons, Dr Deacon stated that NHSE supported the proposed closure.
- 1.5 Councillor Tittley asked why Dr Rasib should wish to close the branch surgery. Dr Deacon reported that the primary motivation for closure was that there were simply too many patients, therefore the situation had become unmanageable for one practitioner. The necessity to operate from two practices was adding to the doctor's inability to administer an acceptable level of care, not least because the requirement to travel between the two locations was proving increasingly difficult and time consuming.
- 1.6 Members asked whether there was a difficulty in recruiting GPs to the Burntwood area. It was reported that GP recruitment is a national problem, however, evidence would appear to suggest that larger practices have had more success in this respect. Smaller, and most notably, single-handed surgeries had found recruitment particularly intractable. The shortage of GPs is further exacerbated by the growing number who wished to work part-time, and that formal retraining is required if a break in excess of 2 years should be taken. This is a factor which militates against those taking extended maternity leave. It was noted that there is a similar shortage of practice nurses.
- 1.7 The funding regime for GP surgeries was discussed by the Committee and it was noted that NHSE had offered those practices which could assimilate Dr Rasib's patients financial support package. This would help to cover the administration costs which would be necessitated by the patients' adoption. Members were advised that all practices in the area have open lists and that the contract for the Health and Wellbeing Centre has been extended, therefore patients will have a choice regarding which practice they sign up with.
- 1.8 Councillor Mrs Woodward summed up the discussion to the effect that:
 - There is sufficient capacity within general practices in Burntwood to accommodate the patients displaced from Dr Rasib's branch surgery.
 - Alternative premises to the branch surgery have been considered, but nothing suitable is available.
 - The proposed new health centre at Greenwood House would become viable later in the year.

1.9 The Committee felt confident that patients from Dr Rasib's Burntwood branch surgery would not suffer any loss in service by its closure.

1.10 The report was noted.

(b) Burntwood Health Centres

1.11 Members were advised that work is to be undertaken to update the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which supports the District Council's Local Plan. Members noted that even though the contract for the Health & Wellbeing Centre at Burntwood had been extended for two years, a large housing development would soon begin and future capacity of the centre would need to be considered.

1.12 Although the issue of future primary care provision has been raised in relation to Burntwood, the IDP will need to take account of needs across the District, and consequently, a meeting is to be convened between the District Council, County Council and NHSE to look at all urban and rural areas. Dr Deacon commented that although there is often a perception that more space is needed, most surgeries are under occupied for the majority of the week.

1.13 A discussion took place regarding problems which have been experienced whilst attempting to make appointments. Members noted that all GP surgeries were able to utilise online booking systems for patients and in the nearness of time, would be required to do so.

1.14 Dr Deacon was thanked for his attendance and valuable input. Similarly, Mrs Wilkins' presence was appreciated. Both the aforementioned left the meeting at this juncture. The information received was noted.

2. FEEDBACK ITEMS

(a) Feedback from Staffordshire Health Select Committee

2.1 The Committee received notes from the recent meeting of the Staffordshire Health Select Committee. The Committee unanimously wished to thank County Councillor White, Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing for the ongoing hard work and dedication he has shown whilst in this role. The Committee noted that he has worked diligently to achieve a new Health Centre at Greenwood House and this was greatly welcomed and commended.

2.2 The information received was noted.

(b) Feedback from the Police and Crime Panel

2.3 The Committee received notes from the recent meeting of the Staffordshire Police and Crime Panel following its meeting on the 26th January 2015. Councillor Greatorex, Cabinet Member for Community, Housing and Health, who sits on the Panel on behalf of the District Council, gave the Committee further details of the meeting. It was reported that meetings were now webcast and had been held at external venues to allow the involvement of a greater number of members of the public.

2.4 It was also reported that following poor performance of the 101 telephone service,

largely as a result of the merger of the Stoke-on-Trent centre with Stafford, where it is now located, more resources had been committed and significant improvements had been made.

- 2.5 Councillors Mrs Woodward and Mrs Evans welcomed any possibility of the SPACE (The Staffordshire Police Activity and Community Enterprise) scheme being reintroduced.
- 2.6 Members also asked whether there would be a Safer Neighbourhood Panel in Lichfield in the near future. It was reported that the Panels were still at trial stage but Councillor Greatorex would continue to follow this up for Lichfield District.
- 2.7 The Committee then agreed that road safety in the proximity of schools was an ongoing problem which was seemingly deteriorating. The feeling was expressed that the police should monitor the situation closely.
- 2.8 There was some disappointment expressed that priority was being given to recruiting PSCO's and not warrant card carrying officers.
- 2.9 The information was received.

3. COMMUNITY SAFETY DELIVERY PLAN 2015-18

- 3.1 The Committee received a report giving an update on the Lichfield District Safer Community Partnership and the Lichfield District Safer Community Partnership Delivery Plan 2015-16.
- 3.2 It was noted that although there had been an increase of 8.2% in anti-social behaviour in the last year, there had been an overall reduction of 39.9% over the past five years. It was noted that the increase last year had been largely due to neighbour disputes.
- 3.3 Community safety funding was discussed and the Committee had some concern that the Commissioner's Community Fund, held by the Police and Crime Commissioner, was being given to groups with the loudest voice and not necessarily where the funding was most needed. It was agreed that more should be done to make parish councils aware of the Fund through the Parish Forum and parish clerks. It was also reported that more claims should be made for the Proceeds of Crime Fund.
- 3.4 It was agreed that the Community Safety Delivery Plan 2015-18 be endorsed and future progress to be reported and submitted to the Committee as appropriate, including the mid-year progress report in the autumn.

4. LOCALITY COMMISSIONING UPDATE

- 4.1 The Committee received a report giving an update on the results of the locality commissioning process to date.
- 4.2 The process for assessing applications and allocating funds was reported along with lessons learned. It had been recognised that some of the outcomes set out in the prospectus had been too broad and so would have to be more specifically defined in future. Not all of the available budget (totalling £0.5m) had been allocated and the Locality Commissioning Board would be meeting in April to consider the future options, including the possibility of a further commissioning exercise.
- 4.3 Councillor Mrs Woodward reiterated previous concerns that there had been a

democratic deficiency in the process and ward Members should have a greater opportunity to have some influence based on their local knowledge.

- 4.4 The Committee recognised that Early Years was not part of the remit of the District Council and therefore had not been made a priority by the Member Working Group. However, this appeared to be a gap in the overall prospectus. It was noted that the voluntary organisation HomeStart had previously been funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group but had not been successful in the locality commissioning process. It was suggested that this area be made a priority if unspent funding were to be the subject of a further commissioning exercise.
- 4.5 Members noted that regrettably no bids were made to prevent homelessness and it was suggested that relevant organisations be reminded of the fund's availability. Members suggested that organisations such as Shelter and the Probation Service may be able to deliver services. A query was raised regarding the feasibility of the District Council's bidding for funding in this area as it could perhaps help officers to deal with people experiencing complex needs. Members were advised it would be possible for a bid to be submitted, although it might prove to be preferable for an external organisation which already has the infrastructure to deal with these complex needs, to do so.
- 4.6 The report was noted.

Councillor Mrs Evans declared a personal interest as her son was currently employed by the Southern Staffordshire and Shropshire Mental Health Service.

5. ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2015/16

- 5.1 Members received a report on the proposed activity and performance indicators for the Community, Housing and Health directorate which would be reported to the Committee on a biannual basis.
- 5.2 It was reported that the indicators followed on from the Directorate Top 10 and would help measure the progress of those tasks. It was noted that the Committee could use the indicators to help inform its work programme.
- 5.3 Members felt that in some instances it could be difficult to judge value for money as some tasks including health were outside the Council's control.
- 5.4 It was agreed that the report be noted and that reports on performance would be submitted to the Committee at the June (2015) and January (2016) meetings.

6. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 Members discussed the Work Programme and it was noted that this was the last meeting of the year. It was requested that Burntwood Health Centre remain as a standing item on the Committee's work programme in the forthcoming Municipal Year.
- 6.2 Councillor Tittley felt that, going forward, the work programme should be more project-management driven with timescales and milestones included.
- 6.3 Members noted that there had been a rather disappointingly poor attendance at some meetings and that it is important to address this.
- 6.4 The Work Programme and Forward Plan was noted.

7. VOTE OF THANKS

- 7.1 It was proposed, duly seconded and resolved that the sincere thanks of the Committee be recorded to all the Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Officers for their work during the past year. It was also stated from the chair that the attendance and enthusiastic participation of Members involved with this Committee was greatly appreciated.

T. Marshall
Chairman
Community, Housing and Health (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee