

HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting: 6th January 2009
At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Tom McGee (Chair) in the chair; Councillor Hazel Lees (Vice-Chair); Councillors Walter Brett, Christine Corris, Chris Gordon, Sylvia Humphries, Bryan Leck, June Somekh and Craig Wright.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 18 November 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

3. CALL-IN

There were no items to consider.

4. PRESENTATION ON NICE GUIDANCE

Andrew Dillon, Chief Executive and Chris Connell, Implementation Consultant from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) gave a detailed presentation on the work of NICE.

The Committee was informed of the role and responsibilities of NICE, together with details on current developments and how their guidance on a wide range of issues relating to health could support the local scrutiny process. Copies of information leaflets produced by NICE had been circulated.

In response to a number of questions, the Committee was informed that the process of evaluation of new pharmaceuticals in England could take longer in comparison to Scotland as additional cost/benefits were considered. The 'fast-tracking' of procedures into the medical mainstream was unnecessary. Although NICE couldn't issue guidance until it had gained an appropriate licence, evidence was often considered in advance of this and the need for 'fast tracking' was negated.

With regard to the pricing of certain pharmaceuticals, the Committee was informed that although NICE was unable to negotiate costs, it could measure in terms cost effectiveness.

In addition, the Committee was informed that NICE was well respected both nationally and internationally but often wasn't as "Nimble" as it would prefer. Time consuming value judgements had to be carefully considered in respect of certain issues which had to be balanced against the public's perception of priorities.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted and that Andrew Dillon and Chris Connell be thanked for their informative presentation.

5. STOCKPORT PRIMARY CARE TRUST STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-09 TO 2013-14

The Chief Executive of Stockport Primary Care Trust (Richard Popplewell) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing the strategic plan for the Primary Care Trust, setting out its strategic vision, improvement priorities and programmes of reform for the next five year period. In addition, the Committee was given a presentation which provided an overview of the highlights of the plan which included:-

- Stockport's life expectancies and mortality rates against the national average.
- Future strategic priorities and specific improvement programmes for Stockport PCT.
- The link between priorities and programmes and the targeting of inequalities.
- Key financial issues.
- Commissioning, competency and collaboration with partners.

The Committee was informed that Stockport PCT recognised and nurtured important relationships with its partner organisations and that certain efficiency savings were often out of its control.

In response to Councillor's questions, the Committee was informed that all statistics were recorded from patient's addresses rather than where treatments were administered. It was recognised that there were health inequalities within the borough and that Stockport PCT would endeavour to address these, particularly in deprived areas.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted and that Richard Popplewell be thanked for his informative presentation.

6. DENTAL DECAY IN CHILDREN AGED 5, 11 AND 12 IN STOCKPORT

On 1 April 2008 the Committee resolved "That a future report be submitted containing information on the significant difference between oral health of Stockport children at the ages of 5 and 12".

The Chief Executive of Stockport Primary Care Trust submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing information in response to this request. In addition, the Committee received a detailed presentation from Lee Holden and Laura Browse which focussed upon dental decay in five and twelve year olds in Stockport.

The main cause of dental decay was sugar in foods and the Committee asked a number of associated questions. A number of programmes had been introduced in order to promote healthy living which would in turn lead to healthier teeth. Councillors commented on the need to adopt preventative policies together with a positive approach to healthy eating. The Committee recognised its role in shaping the agenda, with particular regard to influencing diets and access to foods and the types

Health Scrutiny Committee – 6 January 2009

of foods available within Stockport schools. In addition, Councillors commented on the positive effects of 'Breakfast Clubs' in schools.

Further discussion ensued on issues such as dental health differences between males and females and the positive effects of the introduction of dental techniques such as varnishing.

In response to further questions it was reported that NICE were currently considering dental issues such as the removal of wisdom teeth and the minimum recommended number of annual dental appointments per individual. The Committee was also informed that following March 2009, Stockport PCT would be able to move towards increased local contracts for dentists which would enable the introduction of a more preventative approach.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted and that Lee Holden and Laura Browse be thanked for their informative presentation.

7. HEALTH SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE REPORTING: 2ND QUARTER LAA REPORT

The Public Health Partnership Board submitted the Public Health Performance Management Framework 2nd Quarter report (copies of which had been circulated).

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. AGENDA PLANNING

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy, Performance & Governance) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out the planned agenda items for the Committee's next three meetings, Forward Plan items which fell within the remit of the Committee and progress with the resolutions made at previous meetings during the current municipal year.

The Committee requested that the focus of the meeting to be held on 31 March 2009 be on the changes taking place in services for older people in Stockport.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.26 pm.