

WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Warwickshire County Council held on 11 April 2006

Present:

Councillor Gordon Collett (Chair)

Councillors John Appleton, Peter Barnes, Sarah Boad, David Booth, Ken Browne, John Burton, Les Caborn, Tom Cavanagh, Richard Chattaway, Alan Cockburn, Jose Compton, Chris Davis, Jill Dill-Russell, Michael Doody, Alan Farnell, Anne Forwood, Peter Fowler, Eithne Goode, Richard Grant, Colin Hayfield, Marion Haywood, Martin Heatley, Pat Henry, Bob Hicks, Richard Hobbs, Katherine King, Nina Knapman, Joan Lea, Bryan Levy, Anita Macaulay, Helen McCarthy, Phillip Morris-Jones, Brian Moss, Tim Naylor, Raj Randev, Jerry Roodhouse, John Ross, Chris Saint, Izzi Seccombe, Dave Shilton, Kam Singh, Mota Singh, Ian Smith, Mick Stanley, Bob Stevens, Ray Sweet .B.E.M., June Tandy, Heather Timms, Sid Tooth, John Vereker, C.B.E., John Wells and John Whitehouse.

Invitees: David Roberts, Chief Executive, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust
Chris Capewell, Communications, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust
Shaun Clee, Director of Operations, South Warwickshire PCT
Laurence Tennant, South Warwickshire PCT

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors George Atkinson, Richard Dodd, John Haynes, Richard Hyde, Mick Jones, Bernard Kirton, Barry Longden, Frank McCarney and Mike Perry.

(2) Members' Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

District/borough memberships

The following councillors disclosed a personal interest as members of the district or borough council indicated.

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Councillors: Peter Fowler, Colin Hayfield, Joan Lea, Brian Moss, Mick Stanley, Ray Sweet and Sid Tooth.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Councillors Pat Henry, Bob Hicks and John Ross.

Rugby Borough Council

Councillors: Tom Cavanagh, Gordon Collett, Jerry Roodhouse and Heather Timms.

Stratford on Avon District Council

Councillors: John Appleton, Peter Barnes, Richard Hobbs, Anita Macaulay, Chris Saint, Izzi Seccombe and Bob Stevens.

Warwick District Council

Councillors: Les Caborn, Alan Cockburn, Jose Compton, Chris Davis, Michael Doody, Eithne Goode, Bernard Kirton and Dave Shilton.

Other interests

Item 3

Councillor John Burton declared a personal interest as a member of Mary Ann-Evans Hospice.

Councillor Jose Compton declared a personal interest as an associate member of South Warwickshire Primary Care Trust.

Councillor Jill Dill-Russell declared a personal interest as her daughter worked for a voluntary agency caring for adults with learning difficulties.

Councillor Colin Hayfield declared a personal interest as a non-executive director of North Warwickshire Primary Care Trust and a prejudicial interest in relation to mental health services.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse declared a personal interest as a member of Age Concern, Rugby.

Councillor John Wells declared a personal interest as a non-executive director of Rugby Primary Care Trust.

(3) Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2006 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

(4) Announcements

Julie Brown

The Chair advised the Council that Julie Brown, Secretary to the Chief Executive, had been appointed as assistant to the Clerk to the Police Authority (retaining her responsibility for the Lieutenancy).

The Chair reminded the Council that Julie's first post with Warwickshire County Council was as Secretary to the Deputy County Education Officer in 1972 and later (in 1985) as Secretary to the Chief Executive and that she had remained in that position for 21 years. During this time Julie had also supported the Chair of Council and Group Leaders.

The Chair, Group Leaders and other members paid tribute to Julie for her efficiency, helpfulness and the excellent service Julie had given over her 27 years with the Council and wished her well for the future.

Environment and Economy Directorate- ISO 14001 certification

Councillor Martin Heatley, Cabinet portfolio holder for the Environment, congratulated the Environment and Economy Directorate for achieving European Standard ISO 14001 for its environmental performance.

2006 British Environment and Media Awards – Best Environmental Website.

Councillor Martin Heatley, Cabinet portfolio holder for the Environment, presented a plaque that marked the award to the Environment and Economy Directorate for 'Best Environmental Web Site.' The Council congratulated the directorate on having obtained this prestigious award against tough competition, including multinational companies.

Eliot Park Innovation Centre, Nuneaton.

Councillor Martin Heatley, Cabinet portfolio holder for the Environment, congratulated Environment and Economy Directorate for their part in the development of the EPIC business centre which was already recognised as one of the UK's most environmentally friendly buildings and had recently received the Europe Solar Award for the solar architecture on the southern elevation of the centre. Councillor June Tandy, Leader of the Labour Group, added her congratulations, recognising the hard work undertaken by those involved in the development of this inspiring business centre.

Eco-schools presentation

The Council was advised that there would be a presentation on 23 May to mark Warwickshire schools participation in the Eco-Schools international programme.

(5) Order of business

Item 2 (University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust – Application for Foundation Trust Status) was taken as the last item of the meeting.

2. University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust – Application for Foundation Trust Status.

David Roberts, Chief Executive of the University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust (UHCW NHS Trust), gave a presentation outlining the Trust's application for Foundation Trust Status.

Current position of the Trust

David Roberts emphasised that the Trust wished to build on the success of recent years, and listed some of the key achievements of the trust as follows.

The Trust has:

- Achieved the status of a premier healthcare provider - the trust has a 3-star rating, with low waiting times and low levels of MRSA (the third best in the country with an average of 30 per month and target of zero).
- Attracted top doctors in Europe – 70 new consultants in last 2.5 years (largely through the teaching hospital but also through the medical school).
- Robust financial management –the trust has balanced books and has treated more people.
- Recognition as a healthcare innovator – in transplant (being the only hospital in the UK undertaking kidney transplants from non-compatible donors), neurosurgery, cancer and cardiac.
- To be an active partner in the regeneration agenda, it being only possible to bring health improvements within a vibrant economy.
- A state of the art University Hospital, which will open in summer 2006.
- Exciting development proposals for St Cross Hospital. 30% more orthopaedic operations in 2005 compared to previous years, MRI opens in May and 80% of healthcare is being delivered from St Cross.

Aim of the Trust

David Roberts stated that the Trust had a vision to develop an integrated healthcare delivery system that is capable of meeting the health needs of our communities with dignity and compassion. He stated the aims to:

- Provide high quality healthcare services with the minimum of delay.
- Develop specialist services at the highest national and international standard.
- Ensure our hospitals are community assets.

- Be the hospitals of choice for Coventry and Warwickshire and beyond.
- Be a 'good corporate citizen.'
- Be a friendly employer where staff have rewarding careers.

Benefits of Foundation Status

The Council was reminded that foundation trusts were still part of the NHS and would provide services to the same standards as the rest of the NHS based on need, not ability to pay. David Roberts explained that foundation trust status brought with it greater freedom to meet local needs and an accountability to local communities as it would:

- Help the Trust to provide better patient care by involving local communities in developing services (e.g. in diabetes at the Hospital of St Cross, or cancer care).
- Provide freedoms to enter into partnerships such (e.g. the Health Technologies and Innovations Park, George Eliot and Warwick Hospital).
- Give financial freedom to develop locally tailored services.
- Enhance the teaching and research capability.
- Attract and retain the highest quality staff.

Governance

David Roberts explained that communities would have an integral role in the running of the Foundation Trust and the Trust would actively encourage public to be members and governors. A percentage of staff and volunteers would have automatic membership. Governors would comprise staff/volunteers, public, health partners and local business and would reflect the locality service by UHCW and further afield (North Warwickshire, Coventry, Rugby, South Warwickshire and outside of Warwickshire). He added that members would be able to:

- Influence the future of the hospital's services.
- Receive regular information about the Trust.
- Stand for election to the Council of Governors.
- Vote for those standing for Governor.
- Attend the annual meeting.

The Council was advised that consultation was on the following proposed Allocation of governors but that the Council's advice on this was welcome:

ELECTED		UHCW APPOINTED	
PATIENTS		STAKEHOLDERS	
Patients	3	Coventry Primary Care Trust	1
PUBLIC		Warwickshire Primary Care Trust	1
Coventry North East	2	Coventry City Council	1
Coventry North West	2	Warwickshire County Council	1
Coventry South	2	Warwick University	1
Rugby	2	Coventry University	1
North Warwickshire	1	Coventry and Warwickshire Ambulance NHS Trust	1
Nuneaton and Bedworth	1	Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce	1
Stratford	1	General Practice	1
Warwick	1	To be determined	3
Rest of England (North East and South West)	2	STAFF	
		Doctor	1
		Nurses and Midwives	1
		Other Health Professional	1
		Non Clinical Staff	1
TOTAL	17	TOTAL	16

Timetable

The Council was advised that public consultation would conclude on 19 May 2006 and an application (including feedback from the consultation) submitted to the Department of Health in July 2006. It was envisaged that the trust would be established in the autumn following election of governors in August/September.

Questions and Debate

(1) Parking

Councillor Dave Shilton asked how the problem of lack of adequate parking at the Walsgrave site was being tackled and was advised that a planning application for the car park had been prepared. It was noted that the UHCW Trust had been contributing a considerable amount to subsidised transport routes and was now making representations on how that contribution was being deployed.

Councillor Ian Smith questioned the level of charges for parking at St Cross Hospital (and the costs for patients taking in-coming telephone calls) and was assured that a written answer would be forwarded.

(2) Financial Viability of Hospitals

Councillor June Tandy referred to the current financial difficulties of some hospitals and asked whether the success of the Foundation Trust would have a detrimental effect on local hospitals.

Councillor Chris Saint asked whether other hospitals would lose business in an emerging 'tiering' of services and how the new hospital would fit in with the current structure.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe asked whether local hospitals would be in competition with each other (for patients/funding and staff) and whether the UHCW Trust would support a hospital if it faced financial difficulty.

Councillor John Appleton asked whether David Roberts had a view of the proposals in relation to acute services and how the trust would market itself across the whole south midlands region. Councillor Helen McCarthy also asked about the effect on hospitals that serve Warwickshire but are out of the area and whether they would buy in Warwickshire consultants.

David Roberts replied that the Trust focussed on specialist services with a lot of services being provided in local hospitals, which the UHCW would not be in a position or wish to compete with. For example, emergency admissions could not be handled at the Walsgrave site to the levels elsewhere, 10 being its daily limit whilst 60 or 70 being handled at Warwick or George Eliot hospitals.

David Roberts also referred to the change in the way the NHS was financed with care being paid for at a recognised 'national price'. This meant there was a cost per procedure, for example cataracts may be around £150 per eye but a transplant may be £45,000. He would therefore see the UHCW Trust doing the more complex transplants, where they had the specialists in this area, and local hospitals focussing on the things they can do well. He also aimed to repatriate care within the county where it had gone out of county. As a Foundation Trust the UHCW would be able to compete with the private sector and help ensure work stays within the NHS.

David also commented that it was a natural consequence of successful organisations that they attracted good staff and he would also aim to attract and retain the best staff possible. He stressed that a principle of competitiveness was now part of the new NHS but there was no intention to undermine areas of care being provided by other local hospitals in the area. He advised that there were a number of UHCW doctors who were outreached to different hospitals, for example rheumatology to the George Eliot (under a service level agreement), a neurologist in Worcestershire, and staff also went to Leicestershire and Birmingham where appropriate. He reminded members that there were also new procedures being developed exclusively at UHCW, such

as orthopaedic surgery that required only 48 hours stay but stressed that the hospital was not there to provide research for its own sake, but to develop services for the benefit of people.

(3) Selection of members/governors

Councillor representation

Councillor Saint questioned why, although population of Coventry was less than two thirds that of Warwickshire, the same number of councillor representatives were proposed from each council area.

David Roberts replied that the balance had been seriously considered and that the UHCW had thought this provided equity and balance but that the views of the Council were welcome and that one suggestion had been to have district and borough councils represented as well.

Patient representation

Councillor Tim Naylor asked how the patient representation would be selected and, along with other members, questioned whether patient representatives were appropriate, given their naturally transitory connection with services.

David Roberts replied that this point had been raised by others and that it may be necessary to review this category and perhaps have representation from other areas.

Selection and terms of office

Councillor Phillip Morris-Jones questioned how representatives would be selected, how terms of office would be determined, where the 2 allocated to the rest of England would come from and what would be the accountability and executive powers of the governors. Councillor Bob Hicks asked how patients would benefit from the greater autonomy referred to in the presentation. Councillor Jerry Roodhouse also questioned how an equitable spread would be achieved and how all members would be sure to have a say.

David Roberts replied that the governance framework was set in legislation and that this could be answered more satisfactorily in writing if required. He added that, the legislation only required the local PCT to be in membership (i.e. Coventry PCT) but that the Trust wished to include Warwickshire as well. He advised that an invitation would be sent to all employees and public encouraged to participate and that he welcomed views from elected bodies on how governance may best operate.

Conclusion

Councillor Bob Stevens thanked David Roberts for his presentation and moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor June Tandy. The motion was put to the vote and was agreed as set out below, with no one voting against.

Resolved:

That this Council accepts the general principle of the application of University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust for Foundation Trust Status but only if it does not take patient services or funding away from our local hospitals in Warwickshire.

If the fundamental objective of the NHS Foundation is to help shape services tailored to meet the needs of the community, the equitable distribution of elected members and other appropriate representatives on the proposed governing body should be proportionate to the population of Coventry and Warwickshire so that the views of all the community can be represented fairly and with democratic accountability.

3. NHS Consultation on Mental Health, Learning Disability and Substance Misuse – “*Big enough to count, small enough to care.*”

The Council had received a report from the Strategic Director of Adult, Health and Community Services.

Councillor Bob Stevens referred to a meeting held between the Council's Group Leaders and representatives of Coventry City Council and at which a joint approach had been discussed and a motion proposed for consideration by both Councils.

Councillor Bob Stevens moved the motion and was seconded by Councillor June Tandy. The motion was put to the vote and was agreed as set out below, with no one voting against.

Resolved:

- (1) That this Council supports in principle the formation of a combined mental health trust, but has concerns over governance and operational arrangements.

This will be subject to a formal agreement that there will be:

- Further talks with Coventry City Council and the Primary Care Trusts
- The setting up of a members and officers Joint Panel
- Mutual agreement of process and organisation
- Protection of each partner's interests
- Commitment from all partners including the primary care trusts to making the new mental health trust work for Coventry and Warwickshire residents
- Agreement over financial implications
- Joint scrutiny arrangements
- Working towards commissioning arrangements

- (2) That this Council seeks to establish a joint member/officer and primary care trust shadow commissioning board to oversee detailed setting up of the trust, taking into account the points above. This board will report back to relevant bodies.

4. Integrated Risk Management Plan Year Three Action Plan - Consultation

Councillor Richard Hobbs presented the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)- Year Three Action Plan. The Plan had been subject to consultation and had been approved by the IRMP Policy Panel and the Cabinet who had recommended its adoption.

Councillor Hobbs moved (and was seconded) that the plan be adopted. The Council agreed the plan, no one voting against.

Resolved:

That the Council adopts the Integrated Risk Management Year Three Action Plan on behalf of the Fire Authority with effect from 1 April 2006.

5. Notices of Motion (Standing Order 5).

(1) Buses

The Chair announced that this motion would be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider and report back to Council:

“This Council welcomes the announcement made by Chancellor Gordon Brown, in his budget speech on 22 March 2006, to further extent the concessionary fares scheme so that from 2008, people over 60 and disabled people will be able to travel for free on any local bus across England.

In preparation for this scheme, this Council calls for adequate funding from central Government to end the problems and uncertainties with accessibility to transport, which the local authority is currently facing. This Council calls for a letter to be sent to Warwickshire’s MPs and the Local Government Association asking each to use their respective influence to secure appropriate funding.”

(2) Post Office Card Account

Councillor Nina Knapman moved the following motion and was seconded by Councillor Jerry Roodhouse:

“ This Council does not support the Government’s plans to close the Post Office Card Account in 2010.

This Council believes that both town and rural post offices provide a vital community link for the elderly and other vulnerable members of society. The Post Office will lose an important source of revenue if the Government fails to renew its contract after 2010. The threat of further closures as a result, will only damage confidence and peace of mind for these vulnerable individuals.

This Council calls for a letter to be sent to Warwickshire's MPs asking each to use their respective influence in getting the decision to close the Post Office Card Account in 2010 reversed."

Following a debate the motion set out above was **AGREED** with no one voting against.

6. Question Time (Standing Order 7)

(1) New Start

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse asked the following question of Councillor John Burton, Cabinet portfolio holder for Schools:

" New Start is aimed at students in years 10 and 11 who have been permanently excluded or who are at risk of permanent exclusion. It allows them to go to college for up to 2.5 days a week. From September 2006, Warwickshire College will no longer provide the New Start programme in the eastern and central areas of the County. This is extremely concerning as the programme offers a lifeline to disaffected students and the cessation could see a rise in the numbers of students permanently excluded. Head teachers have expressed their concern about this. Can the Cabinet portfolio holder tell me what alternative support will be provided to these vulnerable students and what plans the Council has to increase the number of excluded students returning to mainstream education?"

Councillor John Burton replied:

"I agree with what you say about the New Start scheme and feel the decision taken by the principal of the college was precipitous and gave us very little time to respond. A meeting has been set up between the principal, directors and Mark Gore to seek to persuade the college to change its approach. The Learning Skills Council is also involved. Discussion will take place after the Easter break and we will do all we can to get these students back on track."

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse asked the following supplementary question:

" Thank you for this answer. Alternative schemes need to be explored. There was a lack of consultation. Will the Cabinet portfolio holder keep

spokespersons involved and report back to the overview and scrutiny committee or full Council?”

Councillor John Burton replied:

“Yes I will ensure the education spokespersons are kept in the loop.”

(2) Care Service

Councillor Nina Knapman asked the following question of Councillor Colin Hayfield (Cabinet portfolio holder for Adult and Community Services):

“I have received a number of complaints from service users and concerned carers in my area regarding the changes to home care service provision. Elderly home care service users were recently informed by a letter, which was written in a manner that caused great anguish and confusion to already vulnerable people. Furthermore, this letter arrived before any communication was received by the carers themselves. The carers were informed of the changes by their worried clients rather than by their employer.

Can the Cabinet member assure me, after the anguish and confusion the changes of the home care service has caused both users and carers, that future communications will be handled in a more timely and sympathetic manner? “

Councillor Colin Hayfield replied:

“This is well founded concern. The Council commissions the service and recently re-tendered resulting in some changes to service. The process itself was handled fairly well to ensure value for money and a quality of service. The communication of changes, however, was not handled particularly well. These are older and often vulnerable people and they should have been better dealt with. I understand that the letter has resulted in a number of enquiries but a smaller number of complaints. The changes have resulted in some carers being transferred to new providers and so there will be continuity of service.

Councillor Nina Knapman asked the following supplementary question:

“ It is very fortunate that the Cabinet portfolio holder is not aware of many complaints as I have been inundated with letters and calls from people who have felt stepped upon and used. I wish the author of the letter had used the style of language that they would use if speaking to people, rather than in the legalistic language that was used in this letter. Can the Cabinet portfolio holder assure members that we will be kept better informed of these processes in future?”

Councillor Colin Hayfield replied:

"I am aware that there have been changes as a result of the tender exercise, with some clients in Alcester (Councillor Knapman's area) being transferred to an alternative provider. I have been assured that the communication will be far better in future."

Councillor Jill Dill-Russell asked:

"Has the change of contract allowed the directorate to advise clients of the direct payment system and if not what is the Cabinet portfolio holder doing to encourage opportunities to make clients aware of this?"

Councillor Colin Hayfield replied:

"I can not say whether this was mentioned but there is the option, if clients are not happy with their new carer, to take up direct payments. Extending the opportunities of direct payment is something that the Adult Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will look at in the future."

(3) Incineration of Waste

Councillor Sid Tooth asked the following question of Councillor Martin Heatley (Cabinet portfolio holder for the Environment).

"Is the Cabinet portfolio holder aware of widespread public concern by publicity given by a local group in Nuneaton that there is a plan to open a large incinerator at the Judkin's site and is he able to deny such a plan exists?"

Councillor Martin Heatley replied:

"A plan to provide an incinerator has not been uncovered. A meeting on the waste development framework was hijacked by a group of people on this subject and they have published information that includes a number of inconsistencies and incorrect information. One of the statements was that there is an intention to build a 'mammoth incinerator'. This is incorrect. There is no intention to build a mammoth incinerator anywhere in Warwickshire. When sites are identified that may be appropriate for an energy from waste plant, a proper process has to be undertaken. There are no plans for a mammoth incinerator to be put in Warwickshire. The concerns have been caused by a particular person's misinformation, including the effects of such an incinerator would have in producing pollution going into Leicestershire!"

Councillor Sid Tooth asked the following supplementary question:

“ This is somewhat reassuring but what is ‘mammoth’ as opposed to an ordinary incinerator? If an incinerator was put in Camp Hill then this would effect property owners and tenants and would be residents. Will the Cabinet portfolio holder take steps to issue a press release with the aim to reassure Nuneaton and the wider public that there are no plans to build an incinerator?

Councillor Martin Heatley replied:

“There have been a number of press statements issued. There may be areas in the County where a site could be identified but anything over 200,000 tonne is not a possibility.”

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.

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Chair