

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL

HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 27 JANUARY 2009

**ROOM M72, 7TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE
CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Stephanie Eaton (Chair)

Councillor Dr. Emma Jones
Councillor Bill Turner

Co-opted Members Present:

Mr John Lee –
Dr Amjad Rahi – THINK Interim Steering Group Member

Guests Present:

– THINK

Officers Present:

Deborah Cohen – (Service Head, Disability and Health)
Afazul Hoque – (Acting Scrutiny Policy Manager)
Shanara Matin – (Scrutiny Policy Officer)

Amanda Thompson – (Team Leader - Democratic Services)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ann Jackson and Lutfa Begum.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bill Turner declared a personal interest in agenda item 4.1 as he was a member of the East London NHS Foundation Trust.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2008 were agreed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Chair reported that the Committee had been expecting a report concerning the PCT's commissioning Intentions for 2009/10, but this had not been received.

The Chair requested that the Health Scrutiny Panel be given the opportunity to comment on these once the report was available.

5. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 Introduction to East London NHS Foundation Trust Members

Received a report from Dinah Morley and Peter Nichol, ELFT Council Members, concerning the East London NHS Foundation Trust - a mental health trust set up in 2007 which brought together mental health services to the City of London, the London Boroughs of Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham, and largely replacing the East London Mental Health Trust.

The Panel noted that the Trust provided a range of community, outpatient and inpatient services for children and young people, adults and older people, as well as some specialist mental health services to North London.

In order to provide a direct relationship between the ELFT and the Health Scrutiny Panel, and enable both ELFT elected members and LBTH elected members to be more effective in representing the mental health needs of residents in the Borough, it was agreed that two members of the ELFT Members Council be invited to attend all future meetings of the Health Scrutiny Panel.

5.2 THINK - Update on the Tower Hamlets Involvement Network

Received an update from Dianne Barham, Director of the Tower Hamlets Involvement Network (THINK), a local consultation scheme which had been set up in every area of England to help people influence or change the way their local NHS and social care services were delivered.

THINK members were local residents, key stakeholders and organisations from across Tower Hamlets, who would be given the opportunity to help influence the design, review and development of health and social care services.

THINK was independent of the Council and the NHS and had the authority to ask service providers for responses to questions, and members would also be able to visit the services themselves in order to get the views of the people that used them. It could then either feed those views back or refer issues to the Health Scrutiny Panel, or the various Health Care Commissions.

Arising from the discussion Ms Barham then responded to questions:

- Working with the homeless or 'street' people was on the agenda and it was hoped that consultation with homeless hostels and walk-in centres could take place if people were willing to provide feedback.
- The Local Government and Public Health Act currently restricted the scheme to health services only as it was not possible for lay persons to visit Children's Services.
- The PCT had welcomed THINK and wanted it to undertake some consultation work on it's behalf in order to avoid duplication.
- There would be an opportunity for information sharing, particularly with other Boroughs, as there were several shared service providers.

The Chair thanked Ms Barham for her contribution to the meeting and for providing an opportunity for elected Members to also get involved and provide their support.

5.3 Barts and the London NHS Trust Update on Annual Health Check Results 2007/08

Matthew Hopkins – Chief Operating Officer, Barts and the London NHS Trust, provided an update on the Annual health Check Results for 2007/2008.

He reported that the Trust had scored 'Good' for Use of Resources, but had dropped down from 'Excellent' to 'Fair' for Quality of Services. The reasons for this were due to the Accident and Emergency staff being under pressure due to the high number of trauma patients, high level of infection rates, and the targets for referrals from GP's not being met.

The Trust had also undergone some radical changes as a result of a management restructure, and had also been one of the first NHS Trusts in the country to implement the new national electronic patients records system, both of which had created a lot of difficulties and required further embedding.

The problems with the implementation of the new IT system had impacted on the scores for the management of patient records, as well as affecting patient appointments. The Trust was working with GP's to try and address this, and was also providing further staff training on the new system.

Mr Hopkins also reported that the new London Hospital was on schedule to open in Spring 2012, and a new cancer centre would open at Barts in twelve month's time. Both hospitals would also function as 'major trauma' sites.

During the next year the Trust would be focusing on improving maternity services and palliative care, as well as improving administrative systems and customer access.

In response to a number of questions Mr Hopkins advised that:

- the level of complaints concerning poor co-ordination between patients and services had been recognised and the automated letters were being rewritten.
- The perception of the presence of MRSA was high however there were in fact only a very small number – approximately 20 – of cases a year.
- The IT company with the contract for maintaining the new patients records system could not be sued for affecting targets as the contract was with the NHS nationally and not with individual Trusts.

5.4 PCT Managed Practices - Consultation

Charlotte Fry – Associate Director, Primary Care Commissioning, Tower Hamlets PCT (THPCT), provided a report detailing the public consultation exercise concerning PCT managed practices which had been brought about by the PCT Board decision to allow it's directly managed GP practices and associated staff to become independent of the PCT.

The Panel noted that THPCT was unusual in directly managing six local practices, despite not having the appropriate expertise. The normal function of the PCT was to manage the GP contract, not the services themselves. Furthermore many practices had expressed a desire to become independent and manage themselves.

The consultation had been designed for patients at All Saints, Barkantine, East One Health and the Whitechapel Health Centre, and would take place for two months with feedback expected in April 2009.

Members of the Panel questioned the value of the exercise and asked whether practices could remain as they were if this was what the patients wished? Ms Fry advised that all the comments would be passed onto the Steering Group.

The Panel asked for a report back on the outcome of the consultation exercise.

5.5 Emergency Dental Services Review - North East London

Bernadette Beckett, THPCT, provided an update on the review of Emergency Dental Services which was being taken forward for consultation with residents and stakeholders within the North East London Boroughs. The aim was to ensure that the future delivery of emergency dental services within North East London met the needs of the community and ensure there were no gaps in provision.

A Steering Group had been set up to oversee the implementation of activity, and a representative of THINK had also been invited to participate in this group.

The Chair asked that the consultation document be sent to Members of the Panel and that a report back be provided.

5.6 Healthcare for London - Update on Progress

Jeremy Gardner, THPCT, advised the Panel that the NHS was required to consult on the proposals contained in Lord Darzi's plans for the future of health care in London. A joint committee of PCT's had been established to manage the consultation.

The Panel noted that London PCT's would be consulting on the proposals around acute stroke and major trauma services, and the Chair had been appointed to represent the Council on the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In response to a question concerning the separation of immediate and aftercare provision, Mr Gardner advised that this would not be the case in Tower Hamlets as it had the best services, although it would be in other Boroughs.

It was agreed that the Health Scrutiny Panel would submit a formal response to the consultation.

The meeting ended at 9.00 p.m

Chair, Councillor Stephanie Eaton
Health Scrutiny Panel