

WESTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

**Minutes of One Hundred and Twenty-fourth meeting of the
Western Health and Social Services Council
held in the Camowen Room, Silverbirch Hotel
Gortin Road, Omagh, Co Tyrone
on Thursday 4 December 2003
at 2.00PM**

Present: Mr R Rogan, Chairman Mr I Maguire
Mr H Andrews Mr M McIvor
Mrs V Brown Mr R McKelvey
Miss M Burke Mr V McKelvey
Mr J Campbell Mr W Page
Mr M Carten Mrs H Quigley
Mrs M Devlin Mrs F Robson
Mr P Gilgunn Mr D Sutherland
Mrs M Hamilton Ms M Trimble

Apologies: Mr E Friel Mr J Kerr
Mr G Keown Mr P McGowan

In Attendance: Ms M Reilly Mrs K Loughran
Mrs L Preston

Presentation 1: Mr Danny McSorley, Chief Executive, Omagh District Council
*“The Challenges of Acute Hospital Services in Omagh and the
Omagh District Council’s Response”*

Presentation 2: Mr Michael Gormley, Head of Consumer Services, WHSSB
“Public Administration Review”

Presentation 3: Mrs Margaret Kelly, Chief Nurse, WHSSB
“Update on Public Engagement on Developing Better Services”

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C84/03 **Presentation:**

“The Challenges of Acute Hospital Services in Omagh and the Omagh District Council’s Response”:

Mr Rogan introduced Mr Danny McSorley Chief Executive of Omagh District Council and Chairman of the Hospital Campaign for the Rural West Steering Group.

Mr Rogan explained that over the last two years the Western Health and Social Services Council had heard presentations from all of the interested parties in relation to the new acute hospital. He said that in February this year the then Health Minister Des Browne announced the decision of Developing Better Services which said that the acute hospital would be just north of Enniskillen and that Omagh would have a local hospital.

Shortly after taking up the post of Chief Officer Ms Reilly was invited by Mr McSorley to meet with him to discuss the decision and to give an ‘Omagh’/West Tyrone perspective as to the impact of such a decision. As a result the Chairman and Chief Officer felt that it was important that all Members of the Western Health and Social Services Council should have an opportunity to hear what Mr McSorley had to say.

Mr Rogan said that since the invitation went out to Mr McSorley the local elections had been held resulting in Dr Kieran Deeny being elected as an MLA standing on the single issue of acute service provision within the West Tyrone area.

In his interview following his election Dr Deeny was at pains to point out that he would not be pursuing an Enniskillen against Omagh Campaign. He recognised that Fermanagh’s right to access acute services was as legitimate as Omagh/West Tyrone’s and Mr Rogan said that the Western Health and Social Services Council would re-iterate that belief.

The Chairman said that it was important to listen to the views and concerns of the people of the Omagh District Council area and that the Western Health and Social Services Council had an obligation to advocate on behalf of all of the people in the Western Board area.

Mr McSorley began by saying he wished to concentrate on a wide range of issues which he referred to as the challenges to acute hospital services in Omagh and then to focus on the Omagh District Council’s response with particular reference to the ‘Hospital Watch Initiative’.

Mr McSorley stressed that Omagh District Council recognised the Western Health and Social Services Council’s very clear and important role in taking

on board the views of users and that the Omagh District Council had no intention of usurping that role. He said they wanted to be complementary to the role in terms of how they could add value to it by working with the Health Council and other Stakeholders in ensuring that the views of users can be heard.

Mr McSorley said the objective of the 'Hospital Watch Initiative' was to develop a simple and effective system, in partnership with; Sperrin Lakeland Trust; the Western Health and Social Services Board and the Western Health and Social Services Council to monitor developments on the quality and extent of provision of acute hospital services in Omagh.

Mr McSorley said the 'Hospital Watch Initiative' was put forward as a confidence building measure, because of the absence of 'trust' in the Sperrin Lakeland Trust. He pointed out that he was focusing on the perceived 'run down of services' at the Tyrone County Hospital. He said this was not an issue which was solely an Omagh District Council one but that Fermanagh and Strabane District Councils would have very much the same concerns about the 'run down of services'.

Mr McSorley outlined the background and Key Performance Indicators to the 'Hospital Watch Initiative' which were identified as being important in terms of monitoring the quality and quantity of services in the area:

The Background

- The Minister's decision of 24 February 2003 on the future profile of acute hospitals;
- An absence of 'trust';
- Perceived run down of services at Tyrone County Hospital;
- The impact of the media/rumour machine;
- Confidence Building Measure - the 'Hospital Watch Initiative'.

Key Indicators

- Competence levels of professional Healthcare Staff;
- Professional Activity levels;
- Numbers of Staff and contractual arrangements;
- Diagnostic Equipment available;
- Acute bed availability;
- Waiting times.

At the same time as adopting the principle of the 'Hospital Watch Initiative' Omagh District Council put in place a joint working group arrangement with Strabane District Council with seven members from Omagh and four members from Strabane. It reports to Omagh District Council through the Health Care Committee and it interfaces with the Sperrin Lakeland Trust through the joint Councils/Trust Board Meetings and with the Western Health and Social Services Board through the recently established Liaison Groups.

Mr McSorley said that developments to date included initial meetings with Sperrin Lakeland Trust, Western Health and Social Services Board, the Western Health and Social Services Council and subsequently a working meeting with the Sperrin Lakeland Trust and the Western Health and Social Services Board together. He said the Western Health and Social Services Board and the Sperrin Lakeland Trust were doing further work to work up the Indicators. Mr McSorley said there would be a working group meeting to review all of this in January 2004.

Mr McSorley speaking about Developing Better Services said that the Minister's decision of 24 February 2003 would worsen service delivery rather than develop better services. He said that it would leave some of the most disadvantaged people in rural Northern Ireland in a much worse position than they are in today in terms of accessibility and quality of services.

The Chief Executive of Omagh District Council said that a major concern was that "the whole basis of the Minister's decision was illogical, unfair and unjust with the Minister failing to provide any evidence to support the decision". He said that an Enniskillen location "would not be sustainable" and he felt that, "even if the decision still stands that it may never be implemented and if not then the people of both Tyrone and Fermanagh would be losers".

Mr McSorley referred to the Department's Website on the issue of a pilot midwife-led maternity unit. He said that the response to the Consultation from Obstetricians in Enniskillen said that you cannot have a pilot because it would collapse the maternity services. He suggested that the Western Health and Social Services Council in their user role had to take a look at some of these issues and what it means for the community in this area.

The Chief Executive of Omagh District Council talking about The (New) 'Strategic Context' said the emphasis was on the 'Tyrone Gap' in Acute Hospital provision. Adding there was a "broad acceptance now that there is a gap". Another issue he felt heightened concerns was the 'uncharacteristic'

rush by the Sperrin Lakeland Trust and the Western Health and Social Services Board to implement the decision.

Mr McSorley said the view of the ‘user’ as expressed at the ballot box made a very clear statement through the election of Dr Deeny. He said there was a need for the Minister to stop the implementation, review the decision and get involved in dialogue to solve the problem.

Mr McSorley concluded his presentation by identifying issues he said needed to be considered:

- ❑ Representing the views of Services Users;
- ❑ Calling a halt to the implementation;
- ❑ Seeking a Review;
- ❑ Working in Partnership;
- ❑ Monitoring Performance - Protecting and Developing Services.

Members were invited to raise any questions they may have with Mr McSorley.

Mr Harold Andrews who is also a member of Fermanagh District Council responded to the presentation by reading from a prepared statement. He summarised the background to the Minister’s decision and said that it was and is the correct decision for all the people of the South-west and that there should not be any further discussion on the matter. To allow any further delay due to this unnecessary debate he said would be to the detriment of all.

Mr Andrews continued by saying the Minister’s recommendation which included a new acute hospital to be located to the North of Enniskillen, a local hospital to be located in Omagh and a protective elective centre along with the new acute hospital must be implemented without any further delay to ensure that all of the people of the South-west whom he represented are given the level of health care to which they are entitled. The model developed is the only accessible, sustainable, equitable option providing the full spectrum of hospital care to the community in the South-west including the people of Tyrone and will serve the communities well.

Mr Rogan emphasised that the statement must be seen as the personal opinion of Mr Andrews and did not reflect the opinion of the Western Health and Social Services Council.

Mr Victor McKelvey referred to the joint work between Omagh and Strabane District Councils and said it seemed to him to be an Omagh

District Council initiative with not much input from Strabane. He stressed that the role of the Western Health and Social Services Council was in the business of equality and concern that everyone in the geographical area gets fair and equal treatment. Mr McKelvey also asked Mr McSorley about the possibility of the run down of services and the criticism of the Sperrin Lakeland Trust.

Mr McSorley said that their Initiative was precisely about equality and ensuring equality of access particularly for those who are most disadvantaged. He said that it was Government policy to target resources to those most in need but that this issue was targeting resources away from those most in need.

Mr McSorley said that the 'Hospital Watch Initiative' model could be used anywhere, and it was not just meant for Omagh and Strabane. He hoped that it would be useful for everyone and he encouraged the Western Health and Social Services Council to become involved in the Initiative.

Mr McSorley said he was not personally criticising Sperrin Lakeland Trust but was reflecting a culture of concern which was causing difficulties within Omagh District Council in terms of the relationships with the Sperrin Lakeland Trust and the Western Health and Social Services Board. He said this was a situation where there was "all sorts of rumours and suggestions about services being run down, staff not being employed, staff on short term contracts, and of staff being harassed".

Mr McSorley concurred that the concept had come from Omagh. He confirmed that the Sperrin Lakeland Trust and the Western Health and Social Services Board were very interested in the idea and were anxious to work it up as they recognised it's value and agreed it was needed. Mr McSorley said he believed that a relationship based on rumour about hospital services is the worst possible situation you could have and indeed, he said that was now the situation. He said that what was needed was a relationship based on facts and to ensure that there was an equal outcome for everyone.

Mr Page said that the issues were the same about most of the hospitals in the Board area and that the Western Health and Social Services Council should take the views and concerns to the assembly when it is up and running.

Mr Campbell said he was worried that the issue was becoming a political football. He said that from a consumer point of view he was concerned that it would be the patients who would suffer and that better services for all the people in the Board area was needed.

Mr McSorley said the 'Hospital Watch Initiative' was geared to achieving what Mr Campbell described. It was to ensure that the quality of services over the next 7 - 10 years remained high and in fact to improve services in the Tyrone County Hospital, the Erne Hospital and Altnagelvin Hospital. It was about protecting and developing existing services and not allowing services to run down.

Mrs Valerie Brown said she wished to add a personal point to the discussion by saying that short term contracts had been in the Health Service for the past 15 years. She said that on the issue of people most in need that Fermanagh people were most in need. She said that in relation to the golden hour that the people in the Tyrone area had Altnagelvin and Craigavon within the golden hour. Mrs Brown said the delay would affect users and she hoped the hospital would remain in Fermanagh.

Mr McSorley said that what was currently on table was not acceptable and would not be accepted. He said there had never been any dialogue between Fermanagh and Tyrone about the facts.

Mr Reuben McKelvey said that recommendations from the Republic of Ireland Government on taking patients to Sligo and Cavan were ignored when the Minister made the decision.

Mr Michael Gormley, Western Health and Social Services Board who was in attendance confirmed that the Board were working up the Initiative with the Sperrin Lakeland Trust and Omagh District Council in the first instance but were also going to be talking to the other Councils and the other Trusts on how these kind of Indicators could be made available to elected representatives and others right across the area.

Ms Reilly said she recognised that people had their own personal views but she wished to reaffirm that the role of the Western Health and Social Services Council and her role as Chief Officer was to represent the concerns of all of the people in the Western Health and Social Services Board area. She said that the Initiative was the basis of a good model and could be adopted by the Western Health and Social Services Council as a way of monitoring hospital service provision at the Erne, Tyrone County and Altnagelvin. Ms Reilly said that irrespective of the decision as to where the hospital would be sited the Western Health and Social Services Council would be failing in their role and duty as a Council if they did not reflect the needs and concerns of the people of this part of Tyrone.

Mr Rogan thanked Mr McSorley for his presentation and said it was unfortunate but inevitable that the decision had created a situation such as we have but that the main concern was for equitable provision of services in

the Western Health and Social Services Board area and that both the Chief Officer and himself hoped to meet with the newly elected MLAs from the area including Dr Deeny and said that no doubt the Western Health and Social Services Council would return to this issue.

C85/03 **Chairman's Business:**

Before the Chairman began his business he welcomed new Member Mr Michael Carten to his first meeting. Mr Carten said he was a member of Limavady Borough Council and had worked in Health and Social Services in Limavady for 17 years and he looked forward to working with the Western Health and Social Services Council. All Members present in turn introduced themselves to Mr Carten.

Mr Rogan said it was planned to conclude Council business by 4.30pm after which Officers from the Western Board would present updates on Developing Better Services and the Review of Public Administration.

The Chairman said the issue of ambulance services in the Western area was one which the Western Health and Social Services Council had been pursuing with the Board. He said as a result of a number of discussions both the Chief Officer and he would be attending the Western Ambulance Liaison Group.

He said it was agreed that whilst the Chief Officer and himself could attend any or all of these meetings there will be a number of specific meetings for joint working to discuss the concerns the Council had raised. The first of the meetings is expected to be held in January and members will be kept informed.

Mr Rogan said that Mr Liam McIvor, Acting Chief Executive NIAS along with Mr Alan Cahill Divisional Officer Western Division will be attending the next Western Health and Social Services Council meeting which will be held on Thursday 8 January 2004.

The Chairman said he wished to thank Mr V McKelvey, Mr Gilgunn, Mr Andrews and Mrs Brown for attending the Developing Better Services public meetings in their local area and for reporting back the public's concerns to the Council. The issues raised continue to be concerns about access to services, ambulance cover, appointments and waiting lists. Mr Rogan said the Western Health and Social Services Council will continue to highlight all these issues over the coming months.

C86/03 **Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

Minutes of the previous meeting held on **Thursday 6 November 2003** having been previously circulated were adopted on the proposal of Mr V McKelvey and seconded by Mr Andrews with a typing error being highlighted on page 7 line 6.

C87/03 **Matters Arising from Minutes:**

The Chief Officer explained the new format for matters arising and asked Members to raise other matters of concern at the part of the Agenda for Members Issues.

C80/03 Response to Actions 1-8:

Action 1 (*Invitation to CAWT*):

The Chief Officer has already timetabled speakers and issues relevant to this business year April '03 – March '04. She will organise invitations to CAWT for the new business year starting in April '04.

Action 2 (*Water Quality - Erne Hospital*):

The Chief Officer said she had been assured by a spokesperson for Sperrin Lakeland Trust that the quality of water which patients are drinking in the Erne Hospital is fit for human consumption.

Mr Gilgunn said that even if the water was declared bacteriology and chemically clear it was still not fit for human consumption because of the foul taste and smell of it. Mr Gilgunn said that the issue had now been resolved.

Action 3 (*Public Engagement – Developing Better Services*):

Mr Rogan said that the Chief Officer sits on the Developing Better Services Redesign group and that he was a member of the Acute Services Steering Group. Ms Reilly is also a member of the Redesign's sub group on Public and Staff Engagement.

The Chairman said there was a strong emphasis on public engagement and it was recognised that public meetings which are often poorly attended were not the only way to engage with the public. He said that there are plans to keep the public informed of developments through leaflets which will be sent out to all households in the Western area.

Mr Rogan said the Board also through its Community Development department has set up a working group which includes the Chief Officer to look at the general issue of public engagement. This group he said has been very active in bringing together research on best practice and devising a set

of consultation/engagement tools. These will be presented as a handbook which staff from Trusts and the Board can use to engage with patients and the public.

Action 4 (*Altnagelvin – Ophthalmic Appointments/Waiting Times*):

The issue of Ophthalmic Appointments/Waiting Times was raised and discussed at the October meeting (C66/03). That meeting was informed that the Consultants were carrying out a full review and will look at ways to tackle waiting lists.

The Chief Officer updated members on Ophthalmology Clinics in the Erne Hospital which had given members most cause for concern:

- ~ Three extra clinics have been held with 100 patients booked and a fourth to be held in December with a further 20 patients booked.
- ~ New Referrals for October - 63.
- ~ Average per month for January – September 2003 - 52.
- ~ New patients seen:
 - > average January – March - 28
 - > average April – June - 44
 - > average July – September - 48
 - > October - 63.
- ~ From week beginning 17 November 2003 an extra session has been added to the Erne, (this session was transferred from Tyrone County Hospital until further notice).
- ~ At the end of October 2003 there were 929 patients on the waiting list at the Erne Hospital.
- ~ It was agreed to continue monitoring this situation and report on the outcome of the internal review.

Action 5 (*New GMS Contract Out-of-Hours*):

The Chief Officer explained that the Western Board had an obligation to ensure that out-of-hours GP services will be provided after December 2004.

To this end there is a Regional Framework currently being developed which will look at standards, best practice, models of working and pricing. When these are developed the Western Health and Social Services Board working through GPs, Trusts and the Western Health and Social Service Council will construct a new out-of-hours service which will be integrated to include

Accident and Emergency, General Practice and Minor Injury Units. The model currently emerging would be more than a GP service and may even include 'twilight nursing' and nursing.

However Ms Reilly said that this was still at the development stage and there are plans to consult with the public early in the new year. She said it is not a negative situation to say that currently GPs are 'opting out' of out-of-hours provision. It is hoped that the new framework will be very attractive to patients and GPs who may then decide to opt in to the new model.

The Chief Officer said that Mr Eugene Gallagher who is leading the regional and local discussions was hopeful that the new model could be in place by next autumn allowing a three month lead in period until January 2005.

The Western Health and Social Services Council will be kept fully apprised on a regular basis.

Mr Victor McKelvey drew members attention to an article in the 'Times' on improvements in the Health Service in relation to waiting times but had made a very relevant point that the worst waiting time record was in Northern Ireland. He also referred to a survey of GPs in GB where 83% have decided to withdraw from the 24 hour service. He said the Western Health and Social Services Council need to make sure there is a comprehensive service on a 24 hours basis in Northern Ireland and keep it monitored.

Mrs Robson said there were concerns about the continuity of care to patients being affected by the new arrangements.

Ms Reilly said that her understanding was that if the new out-of-hours model goes according to plan there will be a much better service in place.

It was also pointed out that Mr Danny Sutherland represented the Council on the New GMS Contract Communication Sub Group and would feed back to the Council.

Action 6 (*Assisted Feeding*):

The Chief Officer and the Chief Nurse hope to meet in January 2004 to take this forward.

Ms Reilly said she had received a letter from Altnagelvin Hospitals Trust inviting the Western Health and Social Services Council to look at their policy on nutrition for patients in hospital. The aim is to ensure the promotion of good nutrition among patients and staff in Altnagelvin and the

objective is to offer menus that allow for healthy choices and to give patients and the public information about diet to encourage healthy eating. She said the policy is to be welcomed and commended. However she said that perhaps such policies need to go further to ensure that the most vulnerable not only have choices and information but that where patients are not physically capable of feeding themselves then properly monitored procedures are in place to ensure there is assisted feeding. Ms Reilly said she would discuss this further with the Chief Nursing Officer at the planned January meeting.

Action 7 (*Senior Nurse TCH – Resignation*):

The Chief Officer spoke with Mr Fee Director of Acute Services Sperrin Lakeland Trust. He acknowledged that a senior nurse had resigned saying she had cited a number of factors which included concerns over staffing levels.

Mr Fee said that the Trust has been trying over the last few years to address the issue of staffing and have been involved in a number of ongoing initiatives such as attending job fairs, advertising locally and staff development days. He also said that staff on temporary contracts for two or more years were now offered permanent posts. He further stated that another group of international staff, fourteen in all, have now arrived in Sperrin Lakeland Trust.

Mr Campbell said he was not satisfied with the response from Sperrin Lakeland Trust and that it did not address the concerns about the Intensive Care Unit. He said he was still getting reports from staff that there were grave concerns about the Intensive Care Unit being understaffed. He also had a concern about the use of nurses whose first language was not English and possible difficulties with communication. He suggested that the Western Health and Social Services Council should formally request a detailed response from the Trust.

The Chief Officer acknowledged that she had spoken to Mr Fee by phone as she was just back from sick leave and had wanted an initial response for this meeting, but had intended to seek further clarification.

Action 1

The Chief Officer will write to the Trust for a detailed response.
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Action 8 (*Mr Andrews Request*):

The Chief Officer is meeting with Mr Andrews to take this forward.

C88/03 **Equality and Human Rights Business:**

The Forum is planning to hold an Equality and Human Rights Fair in the Spring of next year. The Western Health and Social Services Council members will be kept informed.

It is also hoped that the e-learning materials for staff which were discussed at previous meetings will be launched in the early new year.

Work is proceeding on the Regional Interpreting Project for Black and Minority Ethnic Groups. Amongst the achievements to date has been the delivery of a pilot training course for regional HSS staff titled 'Working Well with Interpreters'. Following review and consultation the training has been further refined.

It is hoped to commence selected pilots of the service in early 2004.

C89/03 **Trusts' Business:**

1. ***Altnagelvin Hospitals Health and Social Services Trust:***

Minutes of a Trust Board meetings held on 4 September 2003, 2 October 2003 and 6 November 2003 were acknowledged.

2. ***Foyle Health and Social Services Trust:***

- Minutes of a Trust Board meeting held on 7 November 2003 and an Agenda for a meeting to be held on 12 December 2003 were noted.

3. ***Sperrin Lakeland Health and Social Care Trust:***

- Minutes of a Trust Board meeting held on 23 October 2003 and an Agenda for a meeting to be held on 18 December 2003 were noted.
- A meeting has been arranged with Mr Hugh Mills on 16 December 2003 for an update on the new hospital which will be attended by the Chairman and Chief Officer.
- The Trust Core Brief November 2003 was received.

- The Clinical and Social Care Governance Newsletter November 2004 was acknowledged.

4. ***Royal Hospitals Health and Social Services Trust:***

- Minutes of a Trust Board meeting held on 6 November 2003 and an Agenda for a meeting to be held on 2003 were noted.

- A Report on Clinical Activity Patterns 1998/9 – 2002/3 was acknowledged.

5. *Belfast City Hospital Trust:*

- Minutes of a Trust Board meeting held on 26 September 2003 and an Agenda for a meeting to be held on 28 November 2003 were noted.
- A visitation to Belfast City Hospital by the Chairman and Chief Officer has been arranged with Mr Quentin Coey Chief Executive on 19 December 2003.

7. *Green Park Healthcare Trust:*

- Minutes of a Trust Board meeting held on 6 November 2003 and an Agenda for a meeting to be held on 4 December 2003 were noted.

C90/03 **Members Issues:**

Mrs Hamilton raised an issue where a lady had waited for over a year for a motorised wheelchair. She has had 6 OTs involved in her assessment.

Action 2

Mrs Hamilton was asked to provide further information to the Chief Officer in order to pursue this concern.

Mr Gilgunn asked for information on waiting lists for hip replacements in the Western Board area.

Action 3

Chief Officer to request hip replacement waiting list details from Western Health and Social Services Board.

Mr McIvor said he was still getting complaints about the Ambulance service in Limavady particularly at the weekends. The Chief Officer said that this issue was on the Agenda for the meeting which is organised with the Western Ambulance Liaison Group.

Mr Sutherland asked if a briefing paper covering issues such as where ambulances are located, numbers of ambulances, condition of ambulances etc. could be sent out to members before the January Council meeting.

Action 4

The Chief Officer will ask Mr Brian Baker from the Western Health and Social Services Board for the information and this will be sent out to members prior to the January meeting.

The Chief Officer responding to Mr V McKelvey's query about additional resources for the Council confirmed that she had had a very positive meeting with Mr Lindsay Chief Executive Western Health and Social Services Board resulting in funding from the Western Health and Social Services Board being made available to recruit a Business Services Manager. She hoped to begin the recruitment process in January 2004.

Mr Billy Page asked if someone was making a complaint should they take it to the Patient Advocate before bringing it to the attention of a member of the Western Health and Social Services Council. Ms Reilly responded by saying that ideally the person should make the complaint to the hospital or to the Trust and if they are unhappy with the response then the Health Council will take up their case as an advocate for them. The Chief Officer added that if the person did not feel confident about making the complaint or were unsure about the process, the Health Council will support them.

Mrs Marie Devlin requested that someone from the Foyle Trust should be invited to a future Council meeting to give a presentation on the New Mental Health Services. Mr Rogan said that the draft consultation document would be available from January/February 2004. The Chief Officer said that the Western Health and Social Services Council would be actively involved in the work of the review.

Mr Reuben McKelvey said that Barnardos had issued information about poverty but that he was unable to get any leaflets and he requested that the Western Health and Social Services Council should try to get access to it.

Action 5

The Chief Officer will write to Barnados for this information.

On the issue of pension credits/tax credits raised by Mr R McKelvey it was agreed that it was not within the remit of the Western Health and Social Services Council but a Social Security Agency issue.

C91/03 Correspondence:

Items of correspondence received during the month of October 2003:

- **Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety - Code of Conduct for HPSS Managers.** The Code sets out the core standards of conduct expected of HPSS managers. It will serve two purposes:
 - ~ To guide HPSS managers and employers in the work that they do and the decisions and choices they have to make.
 - ~ To reassure the public that these important decisions are being made against a background of professional standards and accountability.
- **Western Health and Social Services Board - Donemana Branch Surgery.** Notice of approval of closure of Donemana Branch Surgery with effect from 1 October 2003.
- **Law Centre (NI) Community Care Legal Advice Service - Manual Handling: Risks to Staff.** The current legal position – An information Briefing.
- **Northern Ireland Drugs and Alcohol Campaign. Letter re Homelessness and Substance Misuse Research.**

C92/03 **Chief Officers Report:**

Ms Reilly thanked the members for their good wishes during her absence on sick leave. She said as she had only returned to work she had concentrated on actioning the points raised at the November meeting which she had been unable to attend.

The Chief Officer told members that at the next Council meeting on 8 January 2004 they would have a chance to raise issues and hear from Mr Liam McIvor Acting Chief Executive and Mr Alan Cahill Divisional Officer NIAS about Ambulance Services in the Western area.

The Chief Officer said she had attended a conference on 3 December 2003 at the Stormont Hotel on the Review of Public Administration. She felt it was important that a group of members should meet in the New Year to respond to the Review of Public Administration Consultation Document.

Mrs Hamilton; Mrs Robson; Mr V McKelvey; Mr Sutherland; Mr Campbell and Ms Trimble agreed to attend a meeting in the Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh on Monday 7 January 2004 from 5.00 until 8.00pm.

Ms Reilly suggested it would be helpful if members notified the Council staff if they were going to be unavailable for a number of days or were on holiday. This would be useful particularly when organising Council representation at meetings or events which were often called at short notice.

The Chief Officer also requested members to cut out/copy articles from their local newspapers referring to health/social care issues.

Ms Reilly provided details of Presentations planned for the next few months which included LHSCGs, Update on Altnagelvin Hospital Building Programme, CAWT, Review of 2003/04 and the Council's work programme for 2004/05.

The Chief Officer ended her report by wishing everyone a very happy Christmas and New Year.

C93/03 **Any Other Business:**

Mr Sutherland said that he and Mr Gilgunn had attended the Sperrin Lakeland Trust 'See us at Work' Open Day in Coleshill, Enniskillen which was very interesting. He said he was amazed by the apathy of the public which he said is obviously out there or on the other hand he wondered was it the lack of advertising by Sperrin Lakeland Trust as he and Mr Gilgunn were the only members of the public present.

The Chairman said that it seemed to be a general malaise because people only tend to take an interest in the services when they need them and often they do not feel part of it. He said the new process that is ongoing is addressing the problem and how we engage more positively with the public.

Mr Maguire referred to the previous meeting when Mr Brendan McKeever gave a presentation to the Council on the issue where parents are means tested when adaptations are required to the home of a child. Mr McKeever's organisation was trying to have the parental means test abolished.

Mr Maguire asked if the Council had a position on the matter and if not he proposed that it should be brought to the attention of the other three Health and Social Services Councils. Mr R McKelvey proposed that the Council should write to the other Councils and also to the Department of Health in support of the means testing being abolished forthwith.

Mrs Quigley said she wished to be associated with the remarks and suggested that the Council write to the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. Mr Carten said he also wished to be associated with the remarks and that he sat on the Housing Council for Northern Ireland and would raise the issue at the next meeting.

The Western Health and Social Services Council Members were unanimous in adopting the proposal by Mr Maguire.

Action 6

The Chief Officer said she would bring it to the next joint meeting of the Chief Officers of the four Health and Social Services Councils so that they can formally adopt the proposal and respond as a Joint Council.

Mr V McKelvey said he had received a leaflet on Improving Health and Social Services issued by the Western Health and Social Services Board and he wished to compliment them for keeping the public well informed.

Meetings and Events attended by Members

Date: 5 November 2003
Meeting: New GMS Contract
Venue: Tower Hill Hospital, Armagh
Nominated: Mr Sutherland

Date: 12 November 2003
Meeting: Omagh Independent Advice Services AGM
Venue: Community House, Omagh
Nominated: Mr Campbell

Date: 14 November 2003
Event: 'See us at Work' Sperrin Lakeland Trust
Venue: Coleshill, Enniskillen
Nominated: Mr Gilgunn Mr Sutherland

Date: 14 November 2003
Review: Eye Help Desk Programme
Venue: Balmoral Hotel, Belfast
Nominated: Mrs Preston

Date: 18 November 2003
Launch: Care Co-ordination Network UK
Venue: Island Civic Centre, Lisburn
Nominated: Mr Campbell

Date: 19 November 2003
Conference: Feedback on Draft Older People Strategy (WHSSB)
Venue: Fir Trees Hotel, Strabane
Nominated: Mrs Robson

Date: 20 November 2003

Meeting: Regional Advisory Committee on Cancer
Venue: Castle Building, Stormont, Belfast
Nominated: Mrs Robson

Date: 21 November 2003
Conference: Pride and Prejudice
Venue: City Hotel, Londonderry
Nominated: Mr Page

Date: 21 November 2003
Event: 'See us at Work' Sperrin Lakeland Trust
Venue: Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital, Omagh
Nominated: Mr Campbell

Date: 24 November 2003
Launch: 'Stories from the Third Age' (Senior Citizens Consortium S/L)
Venue: Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh
Nominated: Mrs Loughran

Date: 3 December 2003
Meeting: New GMS Contract
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry
Nominated: Mr Sutherland

Date: 3 December 2003
Meeting: Local Appraisal Group
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry
Nominated: Mrs Robson

Meetings and Events attended by Chief Officer (returned to work 24/10/2003)

Date: 24 November 2003
Meeting: CSF3 Team
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry

Date: 26 November 2003
Meeting: Head of Consumer Services (WHSSB)
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry

Date: 26 November 2003
Meeting: Service Re-design Group
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry

Date: 28 November 2003
Meeting: Western Equality and Human Rights Forum
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry

C94/03 **Western Health and Social Services Board Mid-Year Review:**

Mr Rogan welcomed to the meeting Officers from the Western Health and Social Services Board: Ms Karen Meehan, Chair, Mr Steven Lindsay, Chief Executive, Mr Michael Gormley, Head of Consumer Services and Mrs Margaret Kelly, Chief Nurse.

Mr Gormley said that the Board were now developing a response to the Review of Public Administration and that they were working with the Trusts, Investing for Health and with the other Boards.

He said that when the Western Health and Social Services Council were working on their response if they needed any information or input from the Board they would be very happy to provide it.

Mrs Kelly gave an update on Developing Better Services. In developing a Strategic Context which is an implementation plan for the Western Board area she said the aim was to get a service which matches the best standards achieved in other parts of Europe.

The Board have taken a whole system approach. They have been engaging with people in the Board, the Trusts, Primary Care, Local Health and Social Care Groups, Western Health and Social Services Council, Community Networks, the general public and staff.

The Board have also worked in collaboration with the four Boards, the Department and have met with people from the Republic of Ireland.

In terms of Principles Mrs Kelly highlighted the need to work in Partnership, commitment to joined-up integrated care, re-designing services – the need to continually improve services, keeping services local and ensuring services are sustainable.

Mrs Kelly outlined the key points of the vision for the future in the Strategic Context:

- To provide a range and quality of services that matches the best standards achieved in other parts of Europe – striving for excellence.
- To centre on the needs of patients and clients.
- Consistently offering high quality.
- Locally based where appropriate.
- Exploiting technology – using to advantage and utilising.

- Facilitating access to specialist services and knowledge – must have networks with Belfast and further afield.
- Achieving best health and social care outcomes

In achieving the vision Mrs Kelly said there was a lot of work involved and some of the areas which are being focused on are:

- Organisational arrangements to support the change process.
- Workforce implications.
- ICT considerations.
- Clinical network requirements .
- Transport implications – access to emergency services, working with NIAS.
- Performance assessment considerations.
- Broad areas for development and phasing.
- Risk areas and implications.

Mrs Kelly said it was important that the Board would come back with their Strategic Context to the Western Health and Social Services Council before going to the Department.

Mr Gormley said some of the key messages received from the Public engagement process was provision of information, the need for a single voice, public engagement, service provision, patient journeys, rurality, organisation of services and staff issues.

He said the Board were absolutely determined that the documented outcomes of that process will not be put on the shelf. He said the Board will reflect on the messages and show how they are addressing the issues that are being raised.

Mr Rogan thanked the Members of the Board for their presentation. He also thanked the Members for their attendance at meetings during the past year and he wished everyone a Happy, Safe and Healthy Christmas and New Year.

C95/03 **Next Meeting:**

Date: 8 January 2004
 Time: 2.00pm
 Venue: Strabane District Council Offices

47 Derry Road
STRABANE
Co Tyrone

The meeting ended at 5.15pm

The meeting was followed by the Member's Christmas Dinner including guests: Ms Karen Meehan Chair and Mr Steven Lindsay Chief Executive and Officers of the Western Health and Social Services Board and Mr Danny McSorley Chief Executive Omagh District Council.