

WESTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Minutes of One Hundred and Thirty-third meeting of the
Western Health and Social Services Council
held in Strabane District Council Offices,
47 Derry Road, Strabane, Co Tyrone
on Wednesday 3 November 2004
at 3.00PM

Present:	Mr P McGowan, Chairman	Mr J Kerr
	Mr H Andrews	Mr I Maguire
	Mrs A Bell	Mr M Mclvor
	Mrs V Brown	Mr R McKelvey
	Miss M Burke	Mr V McKelvey
	Mr M Carten	Mr W Page
	Mrs M Devlin	Mrs H Quigley
	Mr E Friel	Mr R Rogan
	Mr P Gilgunn	Ms M Trimble
Apologies:	Mr J Campbell	Mrs F Robson
	Mrs M Hamilton	Mr D Sutherland
	Mr B McAleer	
In Attendance:	Ms M Reilly	Mrs K Loughran
	Mrs L Preston	

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C59/04 Chairman's Business:

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Western Health and Social Services Council meeting for November. Before introducing the Council's invited speaker he began by reminding members that there was a very packed agenda with a number of important issues to be discussed.

As you know, he continued this Council has over the last couple of years raised the issue of services for children with learning needs and in particular those who have autism. Our previous Chairman Raymond Rogan has highlighted the lack of service provision in this area.

Therefore Mr McGowan said he was delighted to introduce Ms Arlene Cassidy the Director of PAPA, Parents and Professionals and Autism. He said it was important

that we hear directly from people who are at the coal face of service need and provision in order to better understand the issues.

C60/04 **Presentation:**

Parents and Professionals and Autism (PAPA):

Ms Cassidy thanked the Council for inviting her to give a Presentation on the work of PAPA. She explained that it is a Northern Ireland Charity for Autism formed in 1989 by a group of concerned parents and professionals to ensure that people with Autism and their carers have access to appropriate services, enabling them to be valued members of their community.

Ms Cassidy said that Autism is a disability which disrupts the development of social and communication skills. Approximately 50% of people with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have accompanying learning difficulties, but whatever their level of ability, they share a common difficulty in making sense of the world in the way that others do.

Ms Cassidy explained that the Key Characteristics of Autism are:

- Difficulty with social relationships;
- Communication problems;
- Restricted range of behaviour, activities and interests;

She said that Autism affects one person in every 1,000 with boys four times more likely to be affected than girls and it can be identified by the age of three years. There is no known cure, but with appropriate education and support services, people with Autism can be helped to live their lives with as much dignity and independence as possible.

Ms Cassidy said that living and working with people with autistic disorders is not like living or working with anyone else with or without disabilities. She said past experience of enhancing social interaction and a desire to help are not sufficient guides. It is essential to understand the nature of autistic conditions. People with these disorders she explained because of their social impairments, cannot meet you half way. You have to make an imaginative leap into their world and try and see things from their point of view.

PAPA:

- increase public awareness of Autism;
- develop and maintain local support groups in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties;

- provides an Information Resource e.g. books, videos, articles on Autism, as well as a local Autism Guide;
- co-ordinates Parent Training Workshops and Professional Interest Groups;
- organises yearly Conferences focusing on current issues in Autism
- respond to enquiries;
- produces Practical Resources and a Newsletter 'Contact' giving updates on current service developments, research and treatments;
- encourages and initiates research and training, e.g. diagnosis, early intervention, educational and therapeutic approaches;
- liaises with Statutory and Voluntary Agencies;
- lobbies;
- works in partnership with a range of voluntary, private and statutory agencies;
- provides information and training;
- promotes relevant services for people with Autism;

Ms Cassidy gave a brief outline of the work carried out at the PAPA Branches. They

- have a committee to organise events;
- meet regularly for support;
- have guest speakers of general interest;
- arrange events for families;
- arrange events for siblings
- lobby local politicians
- launch products on ASD e.g. Video, CD ROM.

Branches have a vital role in raising local Autism Awareness and lobbying for service development. All PAPA Branches take part in the Charity's Annual Review of its Strategic Plan.

The PAPA Ethos Statement, which is adopted by each Branch Officer, reflects the eclectic/holistic basis of PAPA's role in representing the broad spectrum of views within the Autism community. PAPA advocates provision of a range of services and interventions on the basis of individualised assessed need not on a "one size fits all" philosophy.

PAPA have Branches In:

- Armagh & Dungannon;

- Craigavon & Banbridge;
- L'Derry;
- Down;
- East Antrim;
- Fermanagh;
- Lisburn;
- Mid-Ulster;
- South Belfast;
- West Belfast;
- North Down and Ards;
- Letterkenny;
- Newry and Mourne;
- North Coast;
- Omagh;

Lobbying Issues PAPA are working on:

- Post 16 Provision;
- Autism Manifesto;
- Centre of Excellence for Autism (Middletown);
- Autism specific services: Education and Health and Social Services Regionally;
- Behaviour Therapy Provision;
- Aspergers Syndrome and Mental Health Services/Autism and Learning Disability Services.

Issues discussed included:

Deficit in service provision.

Education.

Speech & Language Therapy resources.

Mr McGowan thanked Ms Cassidy for the highly informative presentation and assured her the Council would work closely with them to promote the achievement of their aims of PAPA.

C61/04 **Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 October 2004 were adopted on the proposal of Mr Michael Carten and seconded by Mr Michael Mclvor.

C62/04 **Matters Arising from Minutes:**

Response to Action Point AP: a/10/04 - g/10/04:

Action AP: a/10/04: Ambulance Service.

Ms Reilly said she had spoken to Mr Brian Baker on the issue that staff had refused to transfer a patient from Altnagelvin to Belfast. She said the Local Ambulance Liaison Group were due to meet on 22 October and Mr Baker had tabled the issue on the agenda. Ms Reilly said she had been assured that NIAS had been asked to provide a report for the meeting.

She said her intention was to hear the report and based on its content discuss the issue further with Mr Steven Lindsay Chief Executive, Western Health and Social Services Board and Mr Liam Mclvor, Chief Executive of NIAS. However, Ms Reilly said that Brian Baker was involved in an accident the night before and thankfully could report that whilst he was uninjured the meeting had been postponed.

As it wasn't possible to reconvene before today's meeting Ms Reilly said she had asked Brian Baker to provide her with a copy of the report.

Ms Reilly said she had spoken directly with Mr Liam Mclvor in order to voice the Council's concerns:

She said that Mr Mclvor had said that as the matter involved staff not complying with a directive from ambulance control NIAS had to investigate the issue and then decide if it was a disciplinary matter. In that context there were some limitations about the detail which NIAS could go into. Nevertheless she said she was able to confirm (a) the incident did occur when 2 crews (4 staff) refused to transfer the patient and (b) a third ambulance crew was despatched to carry out the transfer.

This she said did have the effect of reducing ambulance cover over that period and the shift was managed with reduced cover.

The preliminary investigation has been completed and NIAS management are assessing if there is a requirement for disciplinary action to be taken. A press release was issued in response to the media inquiry stating that steps had been taken to prevent a similar incident happening in the future.

Ms Reilly said she asked what these steps were and Mr Mclvor stated that as the issue related to individuals and not the Ambulance Service the individuals were directed that in future they must respond as directed by Ambulance Control.

He said this directive was re-stressed so that there could be no ambiguity on the matter and all other staff are fully aware of the directive. He said he had received assurances that this was a 'one-off incident' and he was confident that there would not be a repeat of this.

The Chief Officer said she stressed that the Western Health and Social Services Council members wanted her to communicate their very deep concern over this issue and that such incidents could not be tolerated in an emergency service.

She said that she had asked that following the investigation that members would want to be appraised of the outcome and indeed what impact the incident had made on the service provision for that shift. Mr Mclvor said he would make the Council aware of the outcome but would not be able to discuss if any disciplinary action had been taken.

Ms Reilly said she had reminded Mr Mclvor of his Trust's obligations under reporting of Untoward Incidents (interim guidance issued by Dept. July 2004).

A copy of this guidance will be issued to all members.

Action Point AP: a/11/04

A copy of guidance on reporting untoward incidents to be sent to all members.

Action AP: b/10/04: CS Spray.

Ms Reilly said she had discussed this issue with Dr McConnell who assured her that except in cases of prolonged and repeated exposure to CS Spray its use did not pose a health risk. He referred to an international study undertaken a number of years ago re use of CS Gas which determined there was no serious risk to public health.

Dr McConnell said that the police had notified the Board and Trusts (in particular Accident and Emergency about their use of CS Spray) and that A & E departments are keeping an eye on the use and any effects of CS Spray.

To date there has been no report of anything to raise concerns.
Mr Paddy Gilgunn asked if the use of CR Spray posed a health risk.

Neither the Chief Officer or other members were aware of CR Spray and it was agreed to seek further information on the use of CR Spray.

Action Point AP: b/11/04

Chief Officer to follow up.

Action AP: c/10/04: Hygiene.

The issue of hygiene in hospitals was raised at the Altnagelvin Liaison meeting. Mr Victor McKelvey cited an example of a breach of good hygiene/cleanliness which he had personally witnessed as an inpatient. However he also pointed out that when he raised the concern directly with the Ward Manager the issue was dealt with promptly and appropriately.

The Trust has given assurances that they are dealing with this issue as a matter of priority and have said that they have a continuous internal monitoring and scrutiny process in place.

They also said that an engineer is on hand at the Trust on a 24 hour call out basis to ensure that such events as blocked sinks are dealt with as a matter of urgency.

They also said that there programme of ward refurbishment is continuing apace and that old style porcelain sanitary ware is being replaced with stainless steel fittings.

It was they said important to remember that such refurbishment's had to happen alongside the maintenance of service provision.

The Chief Officer said she would issue Members with a copy of the notes from the Liaison Meeting with Altnagelvin Trust Board.

Action Point AP: c/11/04

Notes of Liaison meeting to be sent to members.

Action AP: d/10/04: Out-of-Hours Consultation Outcome:

Members were sent a copy of the Out-of-Hours press release which had been issued on the day of the last Council meeting.

Action AP: e/10/04: Foyle Mental Health Review:

Ms Reilly informed members that the collation and analysis of all of the responses to the Trust's review had just been distributed to Foyle's own Trust Board. Health

Council member Billy Page who attends these meetings on behalf of the Western Health and Social Services Council had received a copy on the Friday before the Liaison meeting which was held on the Monday.

Ms Reilly said that Mr John Doherty Director of Community Services did say that such was the detail of the Western Health and Social Services Council's response that it merited a separate written document which he would ask Mr Bernard McAnaney Programme Manager for Mental Health Services to share with the members.

It was agreed to wait until after a meeting with Mr McAnaney before discussing the detail of the outcome of the consultation exercise. This will be included on the agenda for next months meeting.

Action Point AP: d/11/04

Include on agenda for December meeting.

Action AP: f/10/04: Sperrin Lakeland Trust - Waiting List Action Plan:

The Chief Officer said this issue has been put on the agenda for the Sperrin Lakeland Liaison meeting. However, she said it was worth pointing out that the Waiting List initiative for in-patients particularly targeting 18 months and 12 months (directed by the Department.) has resulted in a drop of some 2,500 people waiting out of a total of 57,700 approximately.

Ms Reilly said as yet it was unclear whether this is the result of validation i.e. checking if people are still waiting, moved/death/emergency etc. or whether this is a result of patients being seen. The Departments next priority it says is to target out-patient waiting lists.

Action AP: g/10/04: Flu Vaccine - Update:

Ms Reilly informed members she had contacted the Department re the flu vaccine issue and was awaiting their reply.

C63/04 UTV Insight Programme:

Mr McGowan explained that prior to the full Council meeting members met to view the UTV Insight Programme and to discuss the issues raised and also with an awareness that the Minister had just announced an Independent Inquiry. Considerable concern was voiced by members and as a result it was agreed to release the following statement which was then read into the record of the full Council meeting:

All of us present have had an opportunity to view the Insight Programme, 'When Hospitals Kill'. Our first thought is with the families and how deeply tragic it is that three families' lives have been blighted by the events leading to the deaths of their young children. Two of these children; Lucy Crawford and Raychel Ferguson came from and received medical care in our area.

We would want to again offer our sincere condolences to all of the families referred to in the programme.

We are deeply concerned about the medical and care issues raised in the programme and the very disturbing allegations that there was a 'cover-up'.

As members know both the Chief Officer Maggie Reilly and I, met with Mr Hugh Mills, the Chief Executive of Sperrin Lakeland Trust, his Chairman Mr Harry Mullan and Dr Diana Cody the current Acting Medical Director back in May 2004. We met to discuss the reasons why the Western Health and Social Services Council had declined the invitation to participate in the Trust's internal review of the events leading to the death of Lucy Crawford.

Our main concerns and objections at that time centred around, what was in our opinion the very narrow focus of the review, the absence of independent medical expertise and the fact that there was a lack of openness and transparency in the review process. We clearly stated at that time that we would be more confident if the Trust and the Department had instigated a full and independent review of all of the issues relating to the death of Lucy Crawford and the subsequent handling of the parents right to know what had happened to their daughter.

We concluded the meeting saying that as an independent body concerned with matters of public interest that we would reserve the right to comment publicly on the outcome of their completed review.

Since we tabled the Insight Programme as an agenda item events have overtaken us with the announcement by the Health Minister Angela Smith of the setting up of an independent inquiry, led by Mr John O'Hara QC, into the issues raised by Insight and to investigate the allegations made in the programme.

We welcome the intervention of the Minister as an important first step. We would also want to acknowledge the sensitivity shown by the Minister in informing the families concerned of her intentions before making a public announcement.

However as of today we do not know how this inquiry will be taken forward either in it's scope or terms of references.

As a body charged with representing the public interest in health matters and in listening to and reflecting public concern we would strongly urge the Minister to

ensure that the scope of the inquiry is sufficiently wide to encompass all of the issues raised both by ourselves and the Insight Programme.

These families live with an enduring burden of grief and powerlessness which neither time nor compensation could eradicate. We can only guess at the terrible consequences that these untimely deaths have had on the families.

This inquiry therefore must be open and transparent, it must be bound by time within a time frame which is reasonable in which to work and bring about its conclusions. It must be able to call on all of the key people involved in the care of the children and all others who had a responsibility to protect these and future children in the planning and delivery of care.

To that end we call on the Minister to make this a full public independent inquiry and in light of the families' concerns we would further call upon the Minister to appoint an independent Chair from outside the jurisdiction.

The families must have the right to be heard not only as witnesses but also in the shaping of this inquiry. They must be supported to participate in a way that is meaningful to them.

The public whose confidence has been severely dented must observe a process which restores that lost confidence.

The outcome of this inquiry one can only hope will give some relief to the families in the knowledge that whilst nothing will ever return their children to them, that the lessons learnt and changes implemented will mean that no other family should ever have to go through this again.

Members agreed to issue the statement with a few minor amendments. It was also agreed to include the words 'there is an apparent lack of accountability within the Health Service'.

Whilst much of the debate had taken place after the viewing of the programme members were very keen to stress and reaffirm their support of the families involved.

It was agreed to share the Council's Press Statement with the families before releasing it to the Press.

Members were reminded of the Liaison Meeting with Sperrin Lakeland Trust due to take place on Monday 8 November 2004. The Trust's response to the UTV Programme is on that agenda. In view of the seriousness of the issues raised members from outside the Sperrin Lakeland area indicated their interest in attending that meeting.

C64/04 **Trusts' Business:**

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

- Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held on 7 October 2004 and Agenda for a meeting to be held on 4 November 2004 were noted.

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

- Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held on 29 October 2004 and 26 November 2004 and Agendas for meetings to be held on 26 November 2004 and 16 December 2004 were noted.
- Copy of Foyle Trust's October Team Brief was noted.

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

- Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held on 19 August 2004 and Agenda for a meeting to be held on 21 October 2004 were noted.
- Copies of the Trust's Core Briefs for October and November 2004 were acknowledged.
- List of Training Programmes re Violence to Staff.

4. ***Royal Group of Hospitals and Dental Hospital HSS Trust:***

- Notice of Trust Board Meeting to be held on 2004 was received.

5. ***Green Park Healthcare Trust:***

- Minutes of the Trust Board meetings held on 27 September 2004 and 4 November 2004 and Agendas for meetings to be held on 4 November 2004 and 2 December 2004 were noted.

6. ***Belfast City Health and Social Services Trust:***

- Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held on 24 September 2004 and Agenda for a meeting to be held on 26 November 2004 were noted.

C65/04 **Members' Issues:**

Mr Ignatius Maguire enquired about a change in surgery hours at a GP Surgery. The Chief Officer agreed to make further inquiries.

Action Point AP: e/11/04

Chief Officer to investigate.

The Chief Officer updated members on ongoing meetings regarding possible closures of some branch surgeries.

1. Sion Mills Branch - Patients will receive a questionnaire and be invited to a public meeting to discuss GP proposals.
2. Bellarena Branch - Closed due to the unsafe/unsatisfactory premises and its location alongside a dangerous public roadway.
3. Ballykelly Branch - Patients will receive a questionnaire.

C66/04 Any Other Business:

Meetings and Events attended by Members

Date: 7 October 2004
Meeting: Chief Executive and Chairman Altnagelvin Trust
Venue: Altnagelvin Trust Headquarters
Nominated: Mr McGowan

Date: 7 October 2004
Meeting: Altnagelvin Trust Board
Venue: Community Development Offices, Roe Valley Hospital, Limavady
Nominated: Mr McGowan

Date: 11 October 2004
Panel: Interview Panel
Venue: EHSS Board Headquarters, Belfast
Nominated: Mr McGowan

Date: 12 October 2004
Panel: Interview Panel
Venue: EHSS Board Headquarters, Belfast
Nominated: Mr McGowan

Date: 13 October 2004
Meeting: Fermanagh Inter-Agency Group for Older People
Venue: NIHE Offices, Enniskillen
Nominated: Miss Burke

Date: 13 October 2004

Meeting: HSSC's Steering Group
Venue: Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown
Nominated: Mr McGowan Mrs Robson

Date: 15 October 2004
Visit: Cancer Unit
Venue: Altnagelvin Area Hospital
Nominated: Ms Robson

Date: 19 October 2004
Training: Chairs of Public Bodies
Venue: Stormont Hotel, Belfast
Nominated: Mr McGowan

Date: 19 October 2004
Focus Group: Out of Hours
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters
Nominated: Mr V McKelvey Ms Robson Mr Rogan

Date: 20 October 2004
Launch: Altnagelvin Re-development Project
Venue: City Hotel, Londonderry
Nominated: Mrs Hamilton Mr Page Ms Robson Mr Rogan

Date: 20 October 2004
Meeting: National Appeals Panel
Venue: Belfast
Nominated: Mr V McKelvey

Date: 29 October 2004
Meeting: Foyle Trust Board
Venue: Foyle Trust Headquarters, Riverview House
Nominated: Mr Page

Date: 1 November 2004
Meeting: Foyle Trust Liaison Meeting
Venue: Foyle Trust Headquarters, Riverview House
Nominated: Mr McGowan Mr Page Mrs Quigley Mr Rogan

Date: 1 November 2004
Meeting: Altnagelvin Trust Liaison Meeting
Venue: Altnagelvin Trust Headquarters, Altnagelvin Area Hospital
Nominated: Mr McGowan Mr Kerr Mr Maguire
 Mr V McKelvey Mr Page Mr Sutherland

Date: 2 November 2004

Training: DHSSPS/NICON Training and Awareness
Venue: Malone House, Barnetts Demesne, Belfast
Nominated: Mr McGowan Mr Maguire

Meetings and Events attended by Chief Officer/Staff

Date: 7 October 2004
Meeting: Audit GP Practices
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry

Date: 7 October 2004
Meeting: Chief Executive and Chairman Altnagelvin Trust
Venue: Altnagelvin Trust Headquarters

Date: 7 October 2004
Meeting: Complainant (MMP)
Venue: Conference Room, Hilltop, Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital

Date: 8 October 2004
Meeting: D Jordan (Evaluation & Equality Unit DHSSPS)
Venue: Belfast

Date: 11 October 2004
Meeting: Western Equality and Human Rights Forum
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry

Date: 12 October 2004
Conference: CAWT
Venue: Ballyconnell, Co Cavan

Date: 13 October 2004
Meeting: HSSC's Steering Group
Venue: Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown

Date: 14 October 2004
Meeting: Closure of Branch Surgeries
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry

Date: 15 October 2004
Workshop: EQIA
Venue: Mellon Country Inn, Omagh

Date: 18 October 2004

Launch: NI Commissioner for Children and Young People
Venue: Blackstaff Studios, Belfast

Date: 19 October 2004
Meeting: Early Years Sub Group
Venue: Enterprise Centre, Strabane

Date: 19 October 2004
Focus Group: Out of Hours
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry

Date: 20 October 2004
Workshop: Freedom Of Information
Venue: Grosvenor Conference Centre, Belfast

Date: 22 October 2004
Meeting: Investing for Health
Venue: WHSS Board Headquarters, Gransha Park, Londonderry

Date: 25 October 2004
Meeting: Clinical and Social Care Governance
Venue: Castle Buildings, Belfast

Date: 27 October 2004
Workshop: Adverse Incident Report
Venue: Stormont Hotel, Belfast

Date: 28 October 2004
Meeting: Effective Management of Risk and Uncertainty by Public Bodies
 and communication with citizens
Venue: Culloden Hotel, Belfast

Date: 29 October 2004
Meeting: WHSSB/NISRA Small area statistics
Venue: Post Graduate Centre, Tyrone County Hospital, Omagh

Date: 1 November 2004
Meeting: Foyle Trust Liaison Meeting
Venue: Foyle Trust Headquarters, Riverview House, Londonderry

Date: 1 November 2004
Meeting: Altnagelvin Trust Liaison Meeting
Venue: Altnagelvin Trust Headquarters, Altnagelvin Area Hospital

Date: 2 November 2004

Meeting: NI Audit Office (V Kearns)
Venue: Conference Room, Hilltop, Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital

C67/04 **Next Meeting:**

Date: Thursday 16 December 2004
Time: 2.00pm
Venue: Silverbirch Hotel
Gortin Road
Omagh Co Tyrone

The meeting ended at 6.10pm