

At a meeting of the HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on WEDNESDAY 31st OCTOBER, 2018 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor D. Dixon in the Chair

Councillors Beck, Cunningham, Davison, Fletcher, Heron, Johnston, Leadbitter, N. MacKnight, McClennan and O'Brien

Also in attendance:-

Ms Deborah Cornell – Head of Corporate Affairs, Sunderland CCG
Mr Nigel Cummings – Scrutiny Officer, Sunderland City Council
Ms Helen Fox - Senior Communications & Engagement Manager, Sunderland CCG
Ms Andrea Hetherington – Acting Director of Corporate Affairs, South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
Dr Tracey Lucas – GP Executive for Urgent and Ambulatory Care, Sunderland CCG
Ms Natalie McClary - Sunderland AEC Programme Lead, Sunderland CCG
Mr David Noon – Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council
Mr Andy Wright - Director, ASV Research

The Chairman opened the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillor Elliott.

Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd October, 2018 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)

i) Item 4 - Making Urgent Care Work Better In Sunderland – Consultation

Councillors Cunningham, Fletcher, Heron, Johnston and O'Brien made open declarations having voted in favour of a notice of motion considered by Council at its meeting held on 20th June 2018, which opposed 'the intention of Sunderland CCG to downgrade the Urgent Care Services at Houghton-Le-Spring, Bunnyhill and Washington to extended hours GP provision only.'

Making Urgent Care Work Better In Sunderland – Consultation Analysis

Dr Tracey Lucas, GP Executive for Urgent and Ambulatory Care, Sunderland CCG presented a report (copy circulated) which introduced a presentation from Mr Andy Wright, Director, ASV Research providing a detailed overview of the feedback from Sunderland CCG's consultation around Urgent Care which was launched on Wednesday 9 May and ended on 2 September 2018. In summary a total of 2,219 people or organisations participated during the consultation period as patients, members of the public, elected officials, officials of public bodies, trade unions, political parties, and campaigning bodies. The responses provided to the CCG were then independently analysed by ASV Research.

(For copy report and presentation – see original minutes)

Mr Wright took the Committee through a comprehensive presentation which provided a detailed overview and analysis of the findings from the consultation, including:-

- the background and context to the review
- the proposals for urgent care
- the locations for the Sunderland Extended Access Service (SEAS)
- the opening hours for urgent care services
- the Decision making criteria
- the written, verbal, and other submissions
- the summary of outcomes.

The Chairman thanked Mr Wright for his presentation and invited questions and comments from Members. Councillor McClennan referred to the mention of the street survey of Sunderland residents and the assertion that this was the only statistically reliable response in the consultation. She asked if this meant that by inference the other methods could not be relied on. Mr Wright replied that it did not. It merely reflected the vagaries of small population sampling. Sunderland had a population of 289,000 and therefore a minimum sample of 400 would be required. It meant that if ASV could have carried out a census of the whole of Sunderland it was confident that the responses of the street survey would be the same to plus or minus 5%.

Councillor Heron expressed concern that the consultation had not been extensive enough in the Coalfields area of the city and that many people were unaware that it was happening. Dr Lucas contended that additional events had been held, (including a travel and transport event in the Coalfields), advertisements had been broadcast on Sun FM, a four page spread had been published in the Sunderland Echo and events were held in supermarkets such as ASDA. The consultation had aimed to represent best practice with staff attempting to be as proactive as possible.

Councillor MacKnight stated that he had no problem with the statistical analysis and the welcome that people had given to the extended GP service however when you talked to people and explained that the extended GP service already existed, then their perception of the consultation changed somewhat. Councillor MacKnight added that when the review was viewed from this perspective it began to feel more like an exercise in demand management.

Dr Lucas replied that the CCG had made it clear that the extended GP service would not be a walk in service. It would be an expansion of the service that currently existed. It was recognised that there was still work to do to ensure the service was open to all. The CCG had been honest in stating that it did not have a bottomless pot of money and demand was outstripping supply. It also had a number of nationally mandated programmes that were non-negotiable such as the provision of an urgent care centre and an extended hours service. Councillor MacKnight added that he was not unsympathetic regarding the position the CCG found itself in.

The Chair stated that the analysis report highlighted the consultation process itself and identified 'a common observation that the options themselves and the consultation document were unclear, requiring a clarification addendum.' He asked if this was something the CCG would consider when coming to its decision. Doctor Lucas replied that this was exactly why the consultation period had been extended and there was a delay in publishing the findings. Additionally, the CCG needed time to assess the impact of the introduction of the new 111 service. The analysis of the 111 service was undertaken in house by the CCG allowing it to be fleet footed in responding to the findings from the data which was being extracted daily in respect of patterns of capacity and demand.

Councillor Davison expressed concern regarding the street surveys which she believed could be swayed if the interviewees had been led. She also stated that the journey times quoted in the travel and transport plan were unrealistic. In particular she singled out the assumption that the urgent care centre could be reached by public transport in 20 minutes from anywhere within the city. She advised that she had taken a direct bus from Redhill and the journey had taken 45 minutes. She also asked how the petitions received would be addressed.

Mr Wright advised that ASV Research was a member of the Market Research Society and its interviewers were well trained and 'knew their patch'. The supervisor also undertook random back checking with interviewees to make sure they had not been led by the survey staff. With regard to the late submission of the petitions, Dr Lucas confirmed that they would be considered under the CCG's petitions scheme and that this would be reflected in the final version of the consultation report.

The Chair stated that obviously there were concerns in the Coalfield and Washington areas around the location of the urgent care centre at Pallion and while its location made practical sense in terms of its proximity to the hospital, it did disadvantage certain localities. He added that the Committee would expect that this strength of feeling was given serious consideration by the CCG over the coming months in exploring options to mitigate the concerns. Dr Lucas replied that the short answer was yes it would be. The CCG's Board had met the previous evening regarding urgent care and in particular the travel and transport plan.

The Chair asked that the CCG continued to keep the Committee updated in respect of the investigation into options to mitigate the concerns raised by the public in the Coalfield and Washington areas.

Councillor Johnston referred to the survey of clinicians which stated that 37% of the 67 respondents felt that the proposals met needs and asked if therefore 63% felt it did not meet need. Dr Lucas advised that she could provide a full breakdown as that latter figure would also include 'don't knows' and 'would rather not says'. Councillor

Johnston asked whether any of the 67 respondents were directly employed by the CCG. Dr Lucas replied that she believed the answer was no, however she would check to make sure. The CCG operated a clear conflict of interest policy in line with national guidelines.

Councillor Johnston also queried the statement in the presentation that 53% of the street survey respondents felt that the proposal met needs. In reality only 40.9% felt it fully met needs with 12.1% feeling it only slightly met needs. Mr Wright replied that this was an industry standard way of presenting the figures however it would be possible to include the full breakdowns in the final report.

Councillor Johnston questioned whether the period of time during which responses could be made to the draft feedback report (15th to 28th October) was adequate. He also asked to receive a report on how residents in the Coalfield area were to be supported if the decision was ultimately made to site the urgent care centre in Pallion.

Councillor Cunningham endorsed the comments made by Councillor Johnston and the Chair regarding the concerns of Coalfield residents. He stated that it was an issue that was worrying residents and emotions were running high. In addition Councillor Cunningham referred to the concerns highlighted in paragraphs 6.2.2 to 6.5 of the report and stated that he wished to see solutions developed to address them.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Fletcher, Mr Wright advised that the focus groups were comprised of a maximum of 8 invited members of the public and reflected the demographics of the area. Ms Fox advised that the make-up of the area focus were detailed on page 105 of the agenda papers as follows:-

Washington: people of working age (18-67) with families;
Coalfields: older people (55+);
Sunderland East: younger people (18-54);
Sunderland West: people of working age (18-67) without families; and
Sunderland North: a general sample (18+).

The Chairman asked what would happen now with the consultation and what would be the next steps.

Dr Lucas advised that there would be no point in undertaking the consultation if it was not to be given careful consideration. The CCG Board had met the previous evening to discuss how it would be taken forward giving regard to the principles of the Hurdle criteria. There was a need to establish a means of scoring any options devised. There was a raft of data to consider along with the guiding principles, financial information, equality assessments and a workforce strategy. The final decision was due to be taken by the CCG Board on 29th January, 2018 and the meeting would be live streamed.

By way of a closing statement, the Chairman on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee thanked the representatives of the CCG and Mr Wright for their time and cooperation. He advised that the Committee would look to prepare a formal response outlining its thoughts and issues for consideration by the CCG when finalising the proposals for urgent care in Sunderland.

There being no further questions or comments, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the report and presentation be received and noted

Annual Work Programme 2018/19

The Head of Member Support and Community Partnerships submitted a report (copy circulated) attaching for Members' information, the current work programme for the Committee's work to be undertaken during the 2018-19 Council year.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Davison asked that a presentation on the issue of infant mortality was submitted to a future meeting of the Committee or perhaps at a joint meeting with members of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee.

3. RESOLVED that the current work programme for the Committee's work to be undertaken during the 2018-19 Council year be noted and endorsed and that emerging issues be incorporated into the plan as they arose throughout the year.

Notice of Key Decisions

The Head of Member Support and Community Partnerships submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions for the 28 day period from 23rd October, 2018 (copy tabled).

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr Nigel Cummings, Scrutiny Officer advised that a previous issue of the notice had been appended to the agenda papers in error however the correct Notice of Key Decisions for the 28 day period from 23rd October, 2018 had been emailed to Members prior to the meeting and a hard copy circulated round the table for member's consideration.

4. RESOLVED that the Notice of Key Decisions be received and noted.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and contributions.

(Signed) D. DIXON,
Chairman.