

**Birmingham City Council and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council**

**Minutes of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**12 September 2019 at 2.00 pm  
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Present:** Councillor E M Giles (Chair);  
Councillors Carmichael, Costigan and Piper  
(Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council).

Councillors Fowler, Pocock and Tilsley,  
(Birmingham City Council).

**Apologies:** Councillors Brown and Islam (Birmingham City Council).

**In Attendance:** Jessamy Kinghorn and Kieran Caldwell – NHS England (Specialised Commissioning);  
Cherry West and Scott Hancock – University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Trust;  
Toby Lewis – Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust;  
Bill Hodgetts – Healthwatch Sandwell.

42/19      **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019 be approved as a correct record, subject to the following edits:-

Minute No. 10/19 – it was clarified that it was only during the interim phase that some patients would remain at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and that any oncology space at City Hospital was contingent on additional funding.

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43/19

**Update on Development of the Midland Metropolitan Hospital**

The Chief Executive – Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust reported that the Treasury had still not signed the contract with Balfour Beatty, however it was still possible for it to be signed and have the hospital open before the Commonwealth Games in 2022. Assurances had been given from government that if a general election was called, it would not affect timescales.

Once the contract had been signed, a guide would be prepared for the public, detailing the process and financial arrangements. Overall an additional £100m would be spent on the hospital, however, this had not come from local NHS budgets.

It was anticipated that the contract for estates management at the hospital would be awarded at the Trust's Board meeting in October and developers would be on site from December. The Committee was assured that the site would be wind and waterproof before the winter.

44/19

**Update on Measures to Reduce Emergency Care Waiting Times at Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals**

The Chief Executive – Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust reported that pressures continued locally and nationally.

From November respiratory medicine would be moved to City Hospital, which would provide additional beds to manage winter pressures. Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group was leading on public engagement in respect of this.

The effective management and operation of care homes was a key factor in managing demand, and in particular the management of infection. The Trust was working with both Sandwell and Birmingham City councils and specialist care teams to ensure that appropriate measures were in place.

The University of Birmingham was also working on a project to support care homes in managing acutely ill patients, as an

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extension of hospital care. It was hoped that the project would be implemented in January 2020.

At present 82% of patients were seen within the four-hour target. This figure varied between 75% and 86% and was reported as a monthly average so some days the figure was higher, some days lower. The regional average was 83.5%. Consultation was taking place on how this figure was calculated.

Patients presenting with mental health issues continued to be an area of challenge, particularly adolescents, with some patients waiting for around 20hours. So there was a focus on treating patients classified as minors, as well as those waiting between four and five hours. It was reported that the number of cubicles was more of a challenge than the number of beds.

Sandwell Council continued to be materially better than Birmingham City Council in terms of transfers of care from hospital to care homes. The Trust was working with both authorities and other agencies on increasing the number of staff in care homes who could assess patients and improving decision making on Fridays to improve weekend discharges. An electronic prescribing system would also reduce discharge times as quite often patients waited longer than necessary for medication.

It was reported that the UK's impending exit from the European Union was likely to have an impact on staffing levels as many care home staff were from eastern Europe. Care home staff applying for hospital jobs was also an issue, and the Trust was working developing a staff bank system to support care home staffing levels. It was unclear at present what preparations the government was making to address this issue.

45/19      **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

**Resolved** that the public and press be excluded from the rest of the meeting to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 relating to:-

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Minute No. 46/19 – any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority;

Minute No. 47/19 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

(Meeting ended at 3:28 pm)

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