

**Minute of virtual meeting of the
East Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board
held at 10.00 am on 26 January 2022**

PRESENT

Councillor Caroline Bamforth	East Renfrewshire Council (Chair)
Lesley Bairden	Head of Finance and Resources (Chief Financial Officer)
Councillor Tony Buchanan	East Renfrewshire Council
Dr Angela Campbell	Consultant Physician in Medicine for the Elderly
Dr Claire Fisher	Clinical Director
Provost Jim Fletcher	East Renfrewshire Council
Jacqueline Forbes	NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Board
Anne Marie Kennedy	Third Sector representative
Amina Khan	NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Board
Ian Marshall	Scottish Care representative (substitute)
Dr Deirdre McCormick	Chief Nurse
Geoff Mohamed	Carers' representative
Anne-Marie Monaghan	NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Board (Vice-Chair)
Julie Murray	Chief Officer – IJB
Lynne Rankin	Staff Side representative (ERC)
Kate Rocks	Head of Public Protection and Children's Services (Chief Social Work Officer)
Michelle Wailes	NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Board

IN ATTENDANCE

Liona Allison	Assistant Committee Services Officer, East Renfrewshire Council
Eamonn Daly	Democratic Services Manager, East Renfrewshire Council
Pamela Gomes	Governance and Compliance Officer
Tom Kelly	Head of Adult Services - Learning Disability and Recovery
Lee McLaughlin	Head of Adult Services – Communities and Wellbeing
Louisa Yule	Audit Scotland

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Andrew McCready	Staff Side representative (NHS)
Councillor Jim Swift	East Renfrewshire Council

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2. The Board considered the Minute of the meeting held on 24 November 2021. In response to Ms Forbes who sought an update on whether or not all rate changes and backdating in relation to the implementation of the fair work agenda had occurred (Item 8 refers), the Chief Financial Officer indicated that she was not aware that this had not been completed.

The Board approved the Minute.

PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

3. The Board considered and noted the Minute of the meeting of the Performance and Audit Committee held on 24 November 2021.

HSCP COVID RESPONSE

4. The Board considered a report by the Chief Officer providing an update on developments within the HSCP in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and continued pressure being faced by the HSCP, in common with health and social care services across the country.

The report reminded the Board that recent regular updates submitted for consideration had included information on the HSCP's recovery programme, with the last report solely on response to the pandemic having been in May 2021. However, given current pressures the recovery programme had been suspended with the service reverting to full response mode.

The report explained that at the time of writing, a number of service areas were rated as "monitor carefully/prepare to take action" on the critical functions list, these service areas being noted as Care at Home; Learning Disability Inpatients; Adult Protection, and Older Adults Mental Health.

Thereafter the report provided comprehensive information in relation to the challenges being faced across these service areas and the way in which these challenges were being addressed.

In addition, the report highlighted the challenges being faced in other service areas including Public Protection and Children's Services.

In relation to working with other agencies, the report explained that the HSCP continued to link with the Council's Resilience Management Team, and Greater Glasgow and Clyde Tactical Group, in addition to regular Greater Glasgow and Clyde and National Chief Officer meetings taking place.

The Chief Officer then spoke at length in relation to the report. She explained that a further service review had taken place the previous week (21 January), and that overall the picture was improving. Some of the issues in relation to staff absence were easing and services were coping.

Specific reference was made to the challenges in respect of the Care at Home Service which had seen absence rates of 30%. Rates had now reduced to 21% and details of the steps that were being taken to increase resilience, including efforts to attract volunteers to the service, were explained.

Challenges in relation to social work capacity were also referred to and it was further noted that a local campaign to recruit home care assistants was under way.

The Chief Officer also outlined the ongoing work with care homes and the significant additional demands being placed on Children's Services/Public Protection, referring in particular to the 65% increase in the number of children requiring to be accommodated by the service.

In conclusion the Chief Officer restated that overall things were improving, that absences were reducing, and that the focus on social care by both the media and Scottish Government which highlighted the challenges facing the service had been welcomed.

Full discussion then took place and in response to questions from Provost Fletcher it was confirmed that anyone who had responded to the request for Care at Home volunteers was paid the appropriate rate for the job.

Councillor Buchanan paid tribute to the efforts of all staff involved in delivering services in such challenging circumstances, noting that whilst the picture was improving, prioritisation of services would continue for the immediate future. This was confirmed by the Chief Officer who referred to the number of services that had been suspended in light of the need to focus on an increase in demand for support as a result of the pandemic.

Ms Monaghan commented on the impact on carers, and on the increase in the numbers of children to be accommodated. In response, both the Head of Adult Services – Communities and Wellbeing and Head of Adult Services - Learning Disability and Recovery were heard on some of the work that had been undertaken locally to support carers.

In relation to accommodated children, the Chief Social Work Officer explained that whilst the percentage increase was high, the actual number of 6 was low. She highlighted that in most of these cases the children were not already known to the service and had neurodiverse conditions. Dealing with increasing numbers of children with neurodiverse conditions was going to be the biggest challenge going forward and reference was made to the ongoing work with the Education Department in this respect.

Ms Khan emphasised the challenges to service sustainability, and the importance of the recovery and renewal programme resuming as quickly as possible. She questioned what steps were being taken to ensure that service users and client groups were aware of future challenges, and sought clarification of what support mechanisms were in place for staff.

In reply, the Chief Officer explained that communication methods differed depending on the service/client group. Contact methods used included social media and direct clinician contact. The Head of Adult Services – Communities and Wellbeing also provided some examples of staff support mechanisms in use.

The Board noted the report.

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

5. The Board considered a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing details of the projected outturn position of the 2021-22 revenue budget as at 31 December 2021. It was noted that this was the third monitoring report for 2021-22 and provided the projected outturn for the year based on the latest information.

The report set out the confirmed level of 2021-22 winter funding received and the service areas to which it was allocated. Full spend was assumed with a further assumption, in line with the national position, that all unspent balances would be taken to an earmarked reserve.

Indicative allocations for 2022-23 had been intimated, but the distribution of the £554 million announced by the Scottish Government as part of the 2022/23 budget had not been finalised and would be included in the 2022-23 budget report to be considered by the Board in March.

As in previous updates the report explained that HSCP costs related to COVID-19 activity were reported to the Scottish Government via NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, as health boards were the leads on this reporting. For 2021-22 Projected COVID related costs were £9.769 million. Projections were revised on an ongoing basis as response to the pandemic continued.

It was also noted that while some costs had reduced as winter funding was applied, COVID-19 related costs had increased in some other areas. The assumption that £200K savings to be achieved through the restart of the recovery and renewal programme, had been eliminated due to the move back to response.

Costs were reviewed and projections continually revised as response to the pandemic continued. The projections included in the report assumed full COVID-19 funding including support from the Scottish Government for unachieved savings. There was a significant risk to delivering a balanced budget without this support.

Projected costs for 2021/22 and the balance of funding required after reserves having been summarised, the report explained that against a full year budget of £136.193 million there was a projected underspend of £0.165 million (0.12%), after assumed contributions to and from reserves. This would be added to the budget savings reserve, subject to final outturn and agreed reserves position at the end of the financial year.

Comment was then made on the main projected operational variances. Projected costs were based on known care commitments, vacant posts and other supporting information from financial systems as at 31 December 2021, and allowed for the latest known information.

In relation to the underspend in Older Peoples Services, the report sought approval of a budget virement of £500k from Nursing and Residential Care to Care at Home. This reflected current trends and if approved would be reflected in the report in March.

In addition, in relation to reserves the report also sought approval for the establishment of three new reserves; Winter Funding; Trauma Informed Practice; and Mental Health – Mental Health Officer Capacity Building.

The Head of Finance and Resources (Chief Financial Officer) was then heard further on the report in the course of which she gave detailed explanations in relation to the main variances. Referring to the figure of £2.143 million in paragraph 5 of the report in relation to winter funding, she explained that this did not reflect a further confirmed £741k for provider social care pay uplifts resulting in total winter funding for the year being £2.884 million.

Responding to a question from Ms Forbes in relation to the level of reduction in the previously reported overspend of £119k in CAMHS the Chief Financial Officer indicated that she would contact Ms Forbes directly with details.

Also in relation to questions from Ms Forbes on the imbalance in the levels of underspend in the Barrhead and Eastwood Localities, who found it surprising that the larger underspend was in the area with higher levels of deprivation, the Head of Adult Services – Communities and

Wellbeing explained that whilst there were higher deprivation levels in the Barrhead Locality, service demand in the Eastwood Locality was higher. However service provision models, including locality areas were currently under review.

The Board:-

- (a) noted the projected outturn for the 2021/22 revenue budget;
- (b) noted the projected reserves balances and approved the establishment of the following 3 reserves;
 - Winter Funding
 - Trauma Informed Practice
 - Metal Health – Mental Health Officer Capacity Building; and
- (c) agreed to the virements of £500k from Nursing and Residential Care to Care at Home.

FUTURE FUNDING FOR THE FAMILY WELLBEING SERVICE

6. The Board considered a report by the Head of Public Protection and Children's Services (Chief Social Work Officer), advising of the end of the social bridging contract between the HSCP and The Robertson Trust on 31 May 2022, and seeking approval for an alternative funding method to enable the continuation of the Family Wellbeing Service.

By way of background, the report reminded the Board that in September 2017, Children 1st and the HSCP had developed a one year pilot service (the Family Wellbeing Service) to offer early help for children and families who were experiencing emotional distress. The pilot, which included a partnership with two local GP practices, was evaluated as a success and in 2018 the Board agreed to continue to fund the service for a further year to enable expansion to take place. By the beginning of 2019 the service had expanded and took referrals from six GP practices.

The report further explained that during 2018 The Robertson Trust had agreed to fund the scaling up of the Family Wellbeing Service within East Renfrewshire rolling it out to all GP practices within the HSCP. The Trust provided social bridging finance as it was the intention of the partnership to remodel the delivery of mental health services for children through the re-provision of mental health budgets from acute and primary care.

The purpose of additional investment enabled the development of the expansion of the service to reach even more children and families in East Renfrewshire, with all GP practices in East Renfrewshire participating in the project over the three years 2019-2022.

As part of the expansion of the project new success criteria had been agreed and a recent evaluation of the service demonstrated that all the criteria had been exceeded even during the difficulties of providing services during the pandemic.

The report then referred to changing Scottish Government policy and additional resources made available over the preceding three years in respect of supporting mental health in children and young people.

Details of how available funding would be used were set out and it was explained that to enable the Family Wellbeing Service to continue for the next two years following the withdrawing of funding by The Robertson Trust, it was proposed to use current core funding

from the School Counselling reserve which had built up during the pandemic due to a delay in the service being commissioned, and a small top-up from Children and Young Persons Mental Health Framework funding. A full breakdown of the funding proposals was provided.

The Head of Public Protection and Children's Services was heard in further explanation of the proposed approach, and in response to questions from Ms Forbes on when the funding requirement would actually start as the Robertson Trust funding ran until the end of May 2022, clarified the funding periods and associated levels of funding required. She also confirmed in response to Ms Wailes that there were no contractual obligations on the HSCP associated with the withdrawal of funding by The Robertson Trust.

Councillor Buchanan and other members of the Board having offered support for the proposals the Board:-

- (a) noted that the three year social bridging finance contract between the HSCP and The Robertson Trust ended on 31 May 2022; and
- (b) approved the use of the Access to School Counselling Grant and the Children and Young Peoples Mental Health and Wellbeing reserves to fund the Family Wellbeing Services from 1 June 2022 for a 2 year period.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7. It was noted that the next meeting of the Integration Joint Board would be held on Wednesday 16 March 2022 at 10.30 am.

CHAIR