



Great Western Ambulance Service Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Friday 29th January 2010

Bath & North East Somerset Council, The Guildhall, Bath

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr Sylvia Townsend (Bristol City Council) – Chairman (in the absence of Cllr Gravells),
Cllr Adrian Inker (Bath and North East Somerset Council), Cllr Anthony Clarke (Bath and North East Somerset Council), Cllr Sharon Ball (Bath and North East Somerset), Cllr Lesley Alexander (Bristol City Council), Jenny Smith (Bristol City Council), Cllr Ron Allen (Gloucestershire County Council), Cllr Sandra Grant (South Gloucestershire Council), Cllr Sue Hope (South Gloucestershire Council), Cllr Andy Perkins (South Gloucestershire Council), Cllr Ann Harley (North Somerset Council), Cllr Reyna Knight (North Somerset Council), Cllr Andrew Bennett (Swindon Borough Council) (substitute for Cllr Peter Mallinson), Cllr Christine Crisp (Wiltshire Council), Cllr Mike Hewitt (Wiltshire Council), Cllr Ray Apperley (Gloucestershire County Council) (substitute for Cllr Andrew Gravells).

Others:

Elizabeth Power (Gloucestershire County Council), Jill Tompkins (Bath and North East Somerset LINK), Jill Crook (NHS Gloucestershire), Jonathan Lofthouse (Great Western Ambulance Service), David Whiting (Great Western Ambulance

Service), Caroline Pickford (Wiltshire Council), Caerrie Braber (NHS North Somerset), Mark Durnford (Bath and North East Somerset), Victoria Eld (Great Western Ambulance Service), Corinne Edwards (NHS Bath and North East Somerset), Ian Whittern (Unison, GWA Branch), Nicki Millin (NHS Gloucestershire), Becky Parish (NHS Gloucestershire), John Oliver (Great Western Ambulance Service), Romayne de Fonseca (Bristol City Council)

Apologies:

Cllr Andrew Gravells (Gloucestershire County Council) - Chairman, Cllr Peter Mallinson (Swindon Borough Council), Cllr Michael Bray (Swindon Borough Council), Cllr Anne Kemp (North Somerset Council)

Sally Smith (Swindon Borough Council), Jan Stubbings (NHS Gloucestershire).

114 Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 2)

Cllr Andy Perkins declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest as his wife works at University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust.

115 Public Question Time (Agenda Item 3)

No questions were received from the public.

116 Chairman's Update (Agenda Item 4)

The Chairman announced that a report from the Joint Working Group would now be present as a standing item on the agenda.

117 Minutes of the Meeting held 30th October 2009 (Agenda Item 5)

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 30th October 2009 be approved as a correct record.

118 Monthly Performance Information for December 2009 (Agenda Item 6)

David Whiting (Chief Executive, Great Western Ambulance Service) introduced this report to the Committee.

He acknowledged that with regard to the Category A 8 Minute Target Performance they were under target for December at 69.91%, however the year to date figures still remained good at 74.6% with a target of 75%.

The service faced continuing challenges between 20th December and 13th January from the adverse weather. He wished to pay tribute to all his staff for their efforts over this period.

In response to a question from the Committee he stressed that the service had very clear plans if a flu pandemic had occurred within this period.

Jonathan Lofthouse (Director of Service Delivery, Great Western Ambulance Service) spoke of how the service operated in the difficult conditions. A full command network was in place continuously and they were in constant communication between the Highways Dept and the Meteorological Office. The service during this period recognised the need for increasing the number of 4 x 4 vehicles it has access to.

Some members of the Committee commented that the font size of the document was too small and that a commentary should be provided with the figures. The officers acknowledged this and hoped to improve it for the next meeting.

David Whiting (Chief Executive, Great Western Ambulance Service) spoke of the increasing number of Category C incidents and the need for the service to find the correct working model to enable it to move forward in making sustainable improvements.

In response to a question from the Committee he replied that complaints were monitored and that they were not at a significant level. He added that data relating to Key Performance Indicators would be available at the next meeting of the Committee.

In response to a question from the Committee he acknowledged the variation in Accident & Emergency handover times and said that these were being addressed.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report.

119 Benchmarking of GWAS – Performance and Financial Data (Agenda Item 7)

David Whiting (Chief Executive, Great Western Ambulance Service) introduced this report to the Committee.

He informed them that Cllr Gravells had requested to receive this information. He added that currently there was not a great deal of national benchmarking data.

In response to a question from the Committee he replied that the service would strongly be attempting to improve on its rating of 'Weak'.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report.

120 Update from HOSCs (Agenda Item 8)

Cllr Andy Perkins asked for clarification on a point mentioned in the South Gloucestershire Health Scrutiny Select Committee minute extract.

The Category B (not life threatening) performance target to respond to 95% of calls within 19 minutes was not being met due to resource issues. The Community First Responder (CFR) scheme would help address this and was being widely promoted.

David Whiting (Chief Executive, Great Western Ambulance Service) replied that a CFR could not 'stop the clock' for Category B incidents.

Cllr Mike Hewitt commented that he felt Wiltshire was not supported enough and cited ongoing problems in the Kennet area.

David Whiting (Chief Executive, Great Western Ambulance Service) replied that areas such as the Cotswolds, Forest of Dean and Kennet have been identified as areas of specific need.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the written and verbal updates provided by the individual Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

121 Short Life Group on Rural Response Times (Agenda Item 9)

Cllr Ray Apperley spoke of how successful the work regarding Community First Responders had been in Gloucestershire. He recommended promotion of the scheme on a wide variety of levels to enable the public to become more aware.

Cllr Andrew Bennet suggested that Parish Councils should be leafleted to gain their involvement.

Jonathan Lofthouse (Director of Service Delivery, Great Western Ambulance Service) commented that direct funding had been received from the British Heart Foundation to train Vulnerable Groups, Schools and BME Communities.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Note and welcome the draft Terms of Reference attached at Appendix 1.
- (ii) Note the attached CFR update at Appendix 2.

122 GWAS Declaration against Core Standards (Agenda Item 10)

David Whiting (Chief Executive, Great Western Ambulance Service) introduced this report to the Committee.

He informed them that in 2008 / 09 five core standards were not met, these included technology appraisals and mandatory training programmes. He added that a great deal of work had been done regarding this area of the service and now he was pleased to report that only one core standard was outstanding, this was likely to be resolved by March 2010.

The Committee thanked him for the update and welcomed the progress made.

123 Future Draft Strategic Direction and Clinical Strategy of GWAS (Agenda Item 11)

David Whiting (Chief Executive, Great Western Ambulance Service) introduced this report to the Committee.

He explained that the purpose of the paper was to set out the emerging strategic direction and clinical priorities of the Great Western Ambulance Service (GWAS) for 2010-15. GWAS is seeking early engagement and feedback from key stakeholders to help shape the final strategy which will be approved by the GWAS trust board in March 2010.

In response to a question from a member of the Committee he replied that he believed the proposed changes to the structure of the service would lead to improvements.

A Unison representative was present and addressed the Committee. He stated that they could not support the Draft Strategy and would be balloting members on the matter.

David Whiting (Chief Executive, Great Western Ambulance Service) replied that staff were very key to the service. The intention is to have 200 / 300 extra paramedics in the service within the next five years.

In response to a question from the Committee he assured them that the draft strategy was not a tick list exercise and that it would be monitored closely through delivery plans over the next five years.

In response to a question from the Committee he replied that the savings made when the merger of services took place in April 2006 was invested into frontline services.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report.

124 Work Programme (Agenda Item 12)

The Chairman introduced this item to the Committee and asked if they had any issues they wished to raise.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Work Programme as printed.

125 Dates of Future Meetings (Agenda Item 13)

The Chairman confirmed that the next meeting would take place on 23rd April 2010 and proposed that the July meeting take place on the 16th. Venues for both dates were to be arranged.

126 Urgent Business (Agenda Item 14)

There was none.