

AT A MEETING

- of the -

**HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL** held at  
the Council House, Walsall on  
**Tuesday 15 March 2005** at 6.00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Councillor V. Woodruff	(Chairman)
Councillor I. Robertson	
Doreen Russell	(PALS)
Jim Weston	(Patients Representative)
Dr. Anthony Varkey	(Local Medical Committee)
Sam Ramaiah	(PCT)
David Martin	(Health, Social Care and Supported Housing)
Margaret Wilcox	(Joint Director of Mental Health Services)
Mark Inglis	

1. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor D. Pitt, Councillor B. McCracken and Louise Mabley.

2. **Substitutions**

None received

3. **Declarations of Interest and Party Whip**

Councillor Woodruff declared a personal non prejudicial interest as an employee of Walsall Hospitals NHS.

4. **Minutes of previous meeting held on 31 January 2005**

These were recorded as an accurate record of the proceedings.

5. **Draft Notes of the Obesity Joint Working Group – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2005**

It was pointed out that the initial remit of the working group was to look at both adults and children's. It was stated that the report from the working group had focused on children. It was felt that there was a need to bring back a focus on adults and that it was important to bring two together again.

Sam Ramaiah gave some background stating that this was a major issue and the group view had taken into account capacity and time and that seemed to have aimed at children; however, this was not the case. The consultants work will continue to take in the adult population. He suggested that the group look at the council workforce of 20,000 people. He agreed to go back and alter his

approach, acknowledging that work needs to be linked to avoid duplication. He further agreed to work with Dave Martin to ensure expectations are met.

It was agreed that the work group would run both streams but not necessarily with an even split and that the adult stream would look at employment issues.

Jim Weston then, in reference to the work on obesity, distributed a document on diabetes.

Resolved:

Working Group would continue the work on Children's Obesity but also run an adult stream focussing on obesity in council staff.

6. Regional Chairs Meeting – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2005

The panel received the minutes of the Regional Health Scrutiny Chairs and noted that the Public Health White Paper which it referred to on "choosing Health" related to choosing healthy lifestyles. The Regional Chairs had also looked at the health commission's assessment of the white paper.

Updates on work programmes.

The panel noted the information on the current position on the work programmes within the Birmingham and Black Country area.

7. Access to Mental Health Services

The panel welcomed Margaret Wilcox who had been invited to report on the response of the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health's review of accessibility of Mental Health Services in Walsall. She explained her concerns in respect of the shortfalls of the research undertaken but emphasised that this was a learning experience for the future developments of the service.

Despite those concerns there are a number of issues that are close to the ambitions of the service and it was clear that significant progress had been made in last six months. The priority is to focus accessibility of the service for people from BME communities and other groups including women. These are the values embedded in current processes and as a result the last 12 months has seen significant investment towards improvement of the service and more is planned to make a big impact.

Reviewing Day Services

David Martin said that mental health services were good enough in turbulent times, but needed shaping and that Margaret has grabbed it and brought it back from the brink of being not adequate. The upgrading of services and practice is a credit to Margaret and colleagues.

From the GP perspective it was difficult to get in touch with GPs who miss out at the time when events are arranged. Better communication is needed between all services to enable more access for service users.

Dr. Suri said that he was disappointed that researcher did not talk to him because he had done two surveys on GPs. The report doesn't capture that progress has been made and that the service has evolved and moved on. It was suggested that Dr Suri be invited to do another snapshot survey.

Dr. Varkey said that Primary Care Services was improving but needed to be sustained.

It was agreed that the comments from snapshot survey could be perused at the next meeting.

Margaret agreed to produce an action plan and list of the various changes taking place for consideration at the next meeting.

8. Information Items

The panel noted the information items and in particular that the monthly newsletter on Shaping Health prepared by the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health did not mention Walsall. It was hoped that Walsall will be in future newsletters.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 27 April 2005.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 7.05 p.m.

Chairman .....

Date .....