

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee

A meeting of Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee was held on Tuesday, 22nd March, 2022.

Present: Cllr Evaline Cunningham (Chair), Cllr Clare Gamble (Vice-Chair), Cllr Luke Frost, Cllr Lynn Hall

Officers: Julie Butcher (HR,L&C); Gary Woods (MD)

Also in attendance: Colin Wilkinson (Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees)

Apologies: Cllr Jacky Bright, Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Steve Matthews, Cllr Paul Weston

ASH Declarations of Interest

77/21

There were no interests declared.

ASH Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Motion - Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV)

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Further to senior TEWV representatives addressing the Committee in February 2022 to respond to concerns published by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in December 2021, and their subsequent attendance at the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee in March 2022, Members were required to reconvene to decide on the recent Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council motion (agreed in January 2022) regarding the Trust:

‘Subject to detailed consideration and determination by our Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee and / or the Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Committee, Council will write to the Secretary for Health and the Chief Executive of NHS England to call for a public enquiry into the continued failings and lack of notable improvement of Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust (TEWV)’

The Committee began by reflecting on an extract of the minutes from the February 2022 meeting pertaining to the TEWV agenda item. Members were reminded of the key aspects of the presentation that was given by senior Trust representatives, along with the discussion points which followed, and the Committee’s agreement that its decision on the Council motion be deferred until after TEWV addressed the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee (TVJHSC) in March 2022.

Feedback from the subsequent TVJHSC meeting on the 18th March 2022 was then considered. With reference to the presentation slides used by TEWV in support of their submission, a draft summary of the key discussion points was outlined, which included some additional information / developments to that which was provided to the SBC Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee in February 2022. However, it was also noted that Members reiterated the need for more tangible evidence of impact / progress, including data on staff (satisfaction, sickness, bank / agency use) and patient / family feedback. It was felt the repeated concerns around ‘culture’ suggested TEWVs claim that this was limited to pockets of its provision may be misplaced – as such, Members needed evidence of staff voices / feedback to establish any positive shift.

A summary of comments from the CQC Lead Inspector (who was also in attendance at the TVJHSC meeting to provide an update in respect of the CQCs recent inspection report findings) was relayed, as was the agreement for a further TEWV-only TVJHSC meeting to be scheduled in the near future (likely to be in May / June 2022 following the forthcoming purdah period) – the TVJHSC was open to all Members of the SBC Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee attending this additional session. It was also noted that subsequent correspondence with the Lead Inspector had confirmed that the unannounced follow-up inspection of TEWV in relation to concerns published in December 2021 would likely take place by the end of July 2022 (though this timescale was continuously reviewed).

Reference was made to the information received from TEWV yesterday (21st March 2022) in relation to vacancy rates, sickness absence, and bank / agency staff use. Requested at the Committee meeting in February 2022, this was circulated to Members late yesterday evening.

After reviewing the above, Members discussed their feelings on the present situation in relation to TEWV – this was summarised as follows:

- Very mixed thoughts following the presentation and dialogue at the TVJHSC meeting in March 2022. Recognise that time is needed for change to be seen, but concerns remain that feedback from staff or patients is not being provided for assessment and that the same issues continue to crop-up in separate inspections.
- TEWV saying the right things but there continues to be a lack of evidence to assess progress.
- Encouraged by the additional information provided at the TVJHSC meeting but the limited data provided is often meaningless (no context, need overall numbers in addition to percentages). Still no feedback from staff surveys or exit interviews and concerned about the shortfall in staff completing statutory training.
- The published minutes from TEWV Council of Governors meetings suggests a lack of probing and asking the right questions.
- Gillian Keegan MP (Minister for Care and Mental Health) visited the Trust in January 2022 – would be interesting to hear her views.

A vote was then held whereupon it was unanimously agreed that a letter should be submitted to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and the Chief Executive of NHS England, calling for a public inquiry into TEWV. This would be drafted as soon as possible following the meeting.

AGREED that a letter be sent to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and the Chief Executive of NHS England, calling for a public inquiry into the continued failings and lack of notable improvement of Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV).

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Work Programmes 2021-2022 & 2022-2023

Consideration was given to the Committee's current Work Programme, as well as the initial scheduling for the early part of the next municipal year (2022-2023).

Following the conclusion of a busy 2021-2022 Committee agenda, the first meeting of 2022-2023 was due to take place on the 12th April 2022 and would include the presentation of the Day Opportunities for Adults review draft final report and the draft scope and plan for the Committee's next review of Care at Home. The first progress update regarding the agreed actions following the previously completed Hospital Discharge (Phase 2 – discharge to an individual's own home) review would also be considered.

AGREED that the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee Work Programmes for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 be noted.

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Chair's Update

The Chair had no further updates