

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10th DECEMBER 2014

PRESENT:-

CONSERVATIVE GROUP

Councillor Mrs Plenderleith (Chairman), Councillor Atkin (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Mrs Hood and Councillor Mrs Patten

LABOUR GROUP

Councillor Bambrick, Councillor Mrs Heath, Councillor Pearson

OS/23. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs J Mead.

OS/24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM ITEMS ON AGENDA

None received.

OS/25. QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10

None received.

OS/26. QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11

None received.

OS/27. PROGRESS REPORT ON NHS DENTAL SERVICE PROVISION (Verbal report by Councillor Mrs Patten)

Councillor Mrs Patten reported that a low response has been received on the dental provision. There does seem to be some provision in Swadlincote, although it seems there are some residents not using a dental service.

Hatton residents were looking towards Tutbury as there was no NHS provision across their own area. Quite a few residents in Hatton were on a dental plan and the same could be said for Hilton and Etwall.

Councillor Mrs Patten's recommendation would be to pass it on to County to find out why there has been no commissioning since 2006.

The Chair requested Councillor Mrs Patten to write a formal letter to Councillor Bambrick, which would formally finish off the review.

Kevin Stackhouse confirmed the number of responses from the on-line feedback was 12.

There have been gaps identified and the next step would be NHS England, which is a County issue.

Councillor Atkin read out an email he received from a private dental practice in Melbourne, stating that to understand how dental practices are funded can be difficult but went on to explain the current system as:

'In 2006 a new contract was introduced. Prior to this the dentist was paid on a fee per item basis, so that every item had a charge. The new contract was different based around three bands.

Since 1st April 2006 NHS dentists in England and Wales have been paid according to how many "Units of Dental Activity" (UDA) they do in a year. The actual value of a UDA is set by the local Commissioning Group. The average value is around £20 and it varies around the country. In fact two practices on the same road may have totally different UDA values. Each dental procedure has been classified into a band which determines what patients pay and the amount of UDAs a dentist gets. The main bands are:

Band 1 (1 UDA) – Diagnosis, treatment planning and maintenance. Examination, x-rays, scale and polish, preventative work, for example an assessment of a patient's oral health, minor changes to dentures.

Band 2 (3 UDAs) – Treatment. Simple treatment, for example fillings (including root canal treatment), extractions and periodontal (gum) treatment.

Band 3 (12 UDAs) – Complex treatment that includes a lab element, for example bridges, crowns and dentures (excludes mouth guards).

The patient cost is:

Band 1 £18.50

Band 2 £50.50

Band 3 £219.00

If the patient is exempt from NHS charges (ie they are under 18 years or are a pregnant lady) then they obviously pay nothing. The money the practice receives from the patients that do pay is deducted from the monthly amount that is paid to the practice by NHS England.

At 1st April 2006 the total value of the practice contract was based on historic data. Each practice was set a figure of how many UDAs they had to provide each financial year. The Commissioning Group/Local Area Team allow a 2% under or over performance. No extra money is available for an over perform. If you under perform the options are to make up the shortfall in the next year (whilst also making the required target as well), or there is a withholding of monies. Also the contract is reduced the next year. This is sometimes viewed as a treadmill.

The contract is fixed. No extra money to increase this has been available. It is my understanding that the Local Area Team feel that the area has sufficient coverage of NHS dentistry, as patients could access NHS treatment in Swadlincote (25 mins away by car!!).

The NHS funding all comes from the Commissioning Groups, but ultimately from NHS England.

Private patients either pay as a fee per item basis, or via an insurance scheme, such as Denplan.'

The Chair said she was happy to accept the recommendation for this to be passed on to County for further recommendation.

OS/28. **REVIEW OF CUSTOMER SERVICES AND PAYMENTS**

The Chair gave an overview on her visit, together with Councillor Mrs Heath to the Customer Services desk, Civic Offices at 10am Monday 3rd November and Monday 1st December. A member of staff took them through the Customer Services areas and behind the scenes to the Call Centre. They had the opportunity to ask questions. The waiting area was no more than a third full at any time and enquiries were being dealt within approximately 10 minutes.

During the visits they spoke informally to some of the residents who were waiting, asked why they were waiting and, if it was for Council Tax payments,

whether they would welcome a kiosk to make a quicker payment. Opinion was divided fairly equally: some would prefer to hand their cheque/cash directly to a person and were reasonably content to wait; others through the option of a kiosk would speed things up.

During both visits, they were able to see at first hand the processes Customer Services have put in place to reduce waiting times to the minimum – both in the Council Offices and over the telephone. They were satisfied that the processes were as efficient as possible – and it was the sheer volume of enquiries that was causing the pressure at peak times.

The Review was to also consider the installation of a kiosk. From visits to Derby City the Chair agreed kiosks would be a good idea. There are two machines in Derby City that deal with around 3,000 transactions per month. The machines have been in use for around two and a half years and in that time have only broken down three times. The Chair reported that these machines very easy to use and two machines in Derby City have replaced eight cashiers. South Derbyshire deals with around 2,500 payments but would probably be processing about 2,000 transactions. The cost of two machines would be in the region of £33,000. The only on-going costs would be a maintenance plan. Derby City would be happy to share their business case with SDDC.

Using machines would significantly reduce the flow of traffic through the office. People can pay until the offices close. Part payments can be taken by the machines. Cheques could be problematic, more like professional fees, need further investigation on this. Security wise it is good as the machines can take up to £9,000 as opposed to £1,000 from Customer Service Assistant before taking money out of front office.

The Chair confirmed she would be happy to submit a recommendation to Finance & Management to look at obtaining two machines and to look at the physical restrictions of the building to alleviate pressures on Customer Services.

Kevin Stackhouse said hopefully the recommendation will go to the special budget of F&M on 16th January 2015.

OS/29. **CEMETERY PROVISION UPDATE**

Kevin Stackhouse updated the committee, saying the main message being we are still struggling on our own managed sites to secure any more spaces. We have identified some land in Findern that would extend the cemetery space there. We know Etwall are under pressure for providing space for burials in

the future. He went on to say there is a piece of land at Newhall Cemetery we are looking at and also there is land at Findern, which is farm land but it is our land. Over time the farmer has encroached on it but we have claimed it back and fenced it off.

Councillor Atkin said from looking at the report he is not satisfied everything is covered within the cemetery provisions and would suggest creating a new data base of all the grave yards and cemeteries within South Derbyshire and all plots including those reserved. Councillor Atkin said he is happy to take on the project and will liaise with Malcolm Roseburgh. Chair confirmed she is happy for Councillor Atkin to work on this and bring it back to the meeting February/March 2015.

The meeting terminated at 6.40pm

MRS. A. PLENDERLEITH

CHAIRMAN