

# REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

**Chairperson,**  
Cllr. John Joe Culloty

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## MINUTES - MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015 @ 2pm**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, COUNTY HALL, CORK**

### **Present:**

Cllr. James Brown  
Cllr. Mary Butler  
Cllr. John Buttimer  
Cllr. John A. Collins  
Cllr. Timmy Collins  
Cllr. Henry Cremin  
Cllr. John Joe Culloty **Chairperson**  
Cllr. Davy Daniels  
Cllr. Michael Doyle  
Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald  
Cllr. Denis Foley  
Cllr. Breda Gardner  
Cllr. Imelda Goldsboro  
Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae  
Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan  
Cllr. Mike Kennelly

Cllr. George Lawlor  
Cllr. Mary Linehan Foley  
Cllr. Michael McCarthy  
Cllr. Rachel McCarthy  
Cllr. Jason Murphy  
Cllr. Bobby O'Connell  
Cllr. Aaron O'Sullivan  
Cllr. John Pender  
Cllr. Seanie Power  
Cllr. William Quinn  
Cllr. John Sheehan  
Cllr. Mary Shields  
Cllr. Frank Staples  
Cllr. Joe Sullivan  
Cllr. Tom Wood

### **Apologies:**

Cllr. Mary Rose Desmond  
Cllr. Deirdre Forde  
Cllr. Joe Malone  
Cllr. Damian Quigg

### **In Attendance:**

Dr. Ger O' Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospitals Group  
Ms Aileen Colley, Chief Officer, Area 5 Community Health Organisation  
Ms Anna-Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, Area 5, Community Health Organisation  
Ms Yvonne Finn Orde, General Manager, North Cork, HSE South  
Ms Rebecca Loughrey, Specialist in Social Care, HSE South  
Ms Norma Deasy, Area Communications Manager, HSE South  
Members of the HSE South Forum Office staff

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chairperson, Councillor John Joe Culloty, proposed a vote of sympathy with Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan, Area 5, Community Health Organisation on the recent death of her mother.

Councillor John Buttimer proposed a vote of sympathy with Mr. G. O'Dwyer, CEO, South/South West Hospitals Group on the recent death of his father.

Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan introduced Ms. Aileen Colley, who has recently taken up duty as Chief Officer, Area 5.

**1. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

On the proposal of Cllr. Denis Foley, seconded by Cllr. Timmy Collins, the Minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup> 2015 were approved and adopted by the members.

**2. Chairperson's correspondence**

Members were reminded to switch off mobile phones.

**3. Committees:**

The next Committee Meetings will be held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> (South East) and Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> (South West) of October 2015

**4. Notices of Motion**

- (a) In the absence of Cllr. Damian Quigg, Cllr. Henry Cremin moved the following Motion, standing in Cllr. Quigg's name:

"Of the 40 extra nurses required for the CUH, how many of those are specifically required to open the CF unit."

A written response from Mr Tony McNamara, CEO, CUMH Hospital Group was circulated to members and noted.

- (b) Cllr. Danny Healy-Rae moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"To ask the HSE when will the people of Rathmore have a Doctor's Surgery provided in their town as the trip to Millstreet is too much for the sick and elderly people and sick children, this was promised and was to happen earlier in the year following my earlier motion."

Also

- (e) Cllr. John Joe Culloty moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"To call on the HSE to provide a GMS Service based in Rathmore. This should be done by setting up a Clinic with the Doctor who was awarded the GMS contract, or

alternatively, put the contract back out to tender. Rathmore patients are being very much neglected by the HSE."

A joint written response from Mr Ger Reaney, Chief Officer, was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllrs. Healy-Rae and Culloty.

Cllr. Healy Rae thanked the HSE for ensuring that a clinic will be provided in Rathmore today and every Thursday. While noting the issue about planning permission he felt that a more expansive service is required especially to meet the needs of mothers with small children and patients who don't have their own transport.

He expressed regret that it is proving difficult to retain GPs in rural areas and asked the HSE to work with Dr. Walsh McCarthy to ensure a five day service can eventually be provided in Rathmore.

Chairperson, Cllr, John Joe Culloty, agreed that a full time service is required and accepted that the situation may improve in the coming months.

In response, Ms. Yvonne Orde Finn, General Manager, advised that the HSE is aware of the problems with recruitment of GPs for rural practices. She noted that Dr. Walsh McCarthy is due to return from maternity leave in November and that all possible support will be provided to enhance the practice.

(c) Cllr. Tom Wood moved the following Motion, standing in his name:

"That a Capital Allocation be included in the 2016 HSE budget to implement structural changes identified in the recent HIQA report on Saint Patrick's Hospital, Cashel, so as to facilitate long stay residents and staff."

A written response from Ms. Aileen Colley, Chief Officer, Area 5, was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. Wood.

In response to a query about non registration of older units by HIQA, Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan explained that only those units inspected would be affected and that HIQA understood the dynamics of providing facilities for the care of older people.

Cllr. Wood asked about the current plans for the Rehabilitation Unit at St. Patrick's Hospital which was previously to be transferred to the Our Lady's Hospital campus but now seems to be one of the various options being considered.

Ms. Lanigan advised that the HSE management works closely with Estates and HIQA in respect of all facilities for older people.

She undertook to keep local public representatives advised of progress including the possible development of a new build Community Nursing Unit on the St. Patrick's Hospital site.

(d) Cllr. John Sheehan moved the following motion standing in his name.

"That the HSE in developing its longer plans for a possible new Hospital in Cork involving an amalgamation of the South Infirmary/Victoria and Mercy University Hospitals, would ensure that existing infrastructure in those Hospitals would not be neglected and the investment would continue as required to maintain a high quality service in those hospitals".

A written response from Dr. Gerard O'Callaghan, Chief Operations Officer, South/South West Hospitals Group was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. Sheehan.

Cllr. Sheehan noted that there had been concerns in the SIVUH and MUH about the possible neglect of existing infrastructure but that the response had reassured him.

Dr. O'Callaghan added that investment will continue at SIVUH and MUH pending a decision on the provision of a new hospital in Cork.

- (f) "Hospitals are given annual budgets!  
Is it true if they treat more patients than they had envisaged, exceed their budgets, are hospitals then penalised?"

**Cllr. Breda Gardner**

A written response from Dr. Ger O'Callaghan, COO, South/South West Hospitals Group, was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. Gardner.

Cllr. Gardner replied that the current budgetary system is not working and patients are still on trollies. The shortages of GPs is another problem which needs to be resolved and budgets should be increased for community based services. The recruitment of nurses also needs to be expedited. Cllr Gardner also asked if a dimmer switch system could be arranged on the St. Luke's Hospital corridors so that patients on trollies could have a better opportunity to sleep.

In response Dr. O'Callaghan undertook to follow up the lighting issue at St. Luke's Hospital. He pointed out that the reference in the question to hospitals being penalised was incorrect. Hospitals received funding based on the previous year's level of service with additional resources provided to meet issues such as waiting list initiatives and flu epidemics. The South/South West Hospital Group has made significant progress on waiting lists in recent months, and that work is continuing in line with national directives.

The recruitment of nurses is difficult because of the constant turnover as some depart for different reasons. Contracts will be offered to graduates who will be coming on the job market in the coming weeks.

## **5. Questions**

- (a) Cllr. Mary Lenehan Foley put forward the following question:

"Due to unforeseen staff shortages there will be a temporary reduction in the HSE North and South Lee Community Podiatry Service. Does this mean that those with diabetes will no longer be able to have the services of a podiatrist in the coming months?"

A written response from Mr Ger Reaney was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. Lenihan Foley who expressed satisfaction with the contents.

- (b) Cllr. Mary Butler put forward the following question:

"The Ballinamult Health Centre Seskinane, Co. Waterford is no longer being used by the local GPs who have relocated to the Fourmilewater Health Centre near Ballymacarby, Co. Waterford. This is causing a great deal of stress for local residents without transport. The reason given by the GPs for the relocation is because broadband is not available in the Health Centre Seskinane. Is there broadband available in the Ballinamult Health Centre Seskinane? Is there any plans by the HSE to provide broadband to this health centre?"

A written response from Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. Butler who expressed satisfaction with the contents but noted that the only problem now relates to transport for older patients.

- (c) Cllr. Danny Healy Rae put forward the following question:

"To ask if all the same services will be provided in the new facility "Lee Wood", which is to replace "Lantern Lodge" in Killarney? Most importantly will the patients be provided with a lunch and showering facilities as they are totally dependent on these facilities?"

A written response from Mr Ger Reaney was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. Healy-Rae.

In response to a query from Cllr. Healy Rae, Ms. Orde Finn confirmed that lunch and showering facilities will be provided for patients moving to 'Lee Wood' from 'Lantern Lodge' and that all personal care needs will be provided. Ms. Orde Finn emphasised that the new building is more suitable for access and general mobility. She assured Cllr. Healy Rae that the HSE will work with patients and their families to identify the most appropriate care needs on an ongoing basis.

- (d) Cllr. Tom Wood put forward the following question:

"What measures will be taken to provide the necessary staffing levels at Saint Patrick's Hospital, Cashel and Our Lady's Hospital following the transfer of the Rehabilitation Unit and other beds to the new complex?"

A written response from Ms. Aileen Colley, Chief Officer, Area 5, was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. Wood.

In reply to a query from Councillor Wood about the recruitment process, Ms. Lanigan advised that the start date was the staffing analysis of February 2015 and this was consistent with HSE policy of reducing agency personnel in all units and moving to sustainable HSE staffing levels.

- (e) In the absence of Cllr. Damian Quigg, Cllr. Henry Cremin put forward the following question in his name:

"There are currently three x-ray rooms in Kerry General Hospital, why can patients not be x-rayed in the outpatients section instead of having to wait extraordinary lengths of time for x-rays?"

A written response from Mr TJ O'Connor, General Manager in Kerry General Hospital was circulated to members and the contents were noted.

- (f) Cllr. Dr John Sheehan put forward the following question:

"In view of the fact that HIQA reported in June that the existing General/ENT Operating theatres in the South Infirmary/Victoria Hospital are not fit for purpose and need significant renovation, what are the HSE plans, in terms of funding and timescale for the renovation of these theatres?"

A written response from Ms Helen Donovan, Interim CEO, South Infirmary/Victoria Hospital was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. John Sheehan.

Cllr. Sheehan asked if capital would be provided and if so what would the timeline be?

Dr. O'Callaghan confirmed that this capital project has been prioritised for attention and is currently at Phase 2, having been agreed locally and referred to the Design Team which will report shortly with the requirements.

He advised that the current problem is caused by the size of the theatres but that there are options on the site to do the essential work. Depending on the Design Team report it is anticipated that the job may be completed in 12 to 18 months.

- (g) Cllr. John Joe Culloty put forward the following question:

"There are a large number of parents whose children appear to have long-term adverse reactions to the Anti-Cervical HPV Gardasil Vaccine. Has the HSE investigated this link, and if so, what are the findings?"

A written response from Dr. Brenda Corcoran, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. John Joe Culloty.

In response to a query from the Chairperson, Ms Orde Finn advised that the vaccine is 99% effective and of 4,259 doses administered in Cork/Kerry during 2014 only 5 adverse incidents were reported. Senior Area Medical Officers and Area Medical Officers are available at HSE level to discuss the vaccines' side effects with parents as required.

Cllr. Linehan Foley noted there were some recent media reports which caused concern and she noted that many parents became more worried a year on rather than at the time it is administered.

Ms. Orde Finn confirmed that the Gardasil vaccine has been tested on 25,000 females in 33 countries with no reaction reported.

- (h) Cllr. Breda Gardner put forward the following question:

"How much money is spent on the HSE yearly approximately?  
How much is spent on preventative medicine tackling its alcohol abuse, cigarette smoking and obesity?  
How do you see the sickness system can be turned into a genuine health system that could improve the level of well being in Ireland?"

A written response from Dr. Ger O'Callaghan was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. Breda Gardner.

In view of the detailed information provided in the response which needs more time to study Cllr. Gardiner asked if the replies to Notices of Motions and Questions could be made available to members the day before the Forum meetings.

Dr. O'Callaghan agreed to investigate if it is possible.

- (i) Cllr. Davy Daniels put forward the following question:

"What is the commencement date for the new Hospital and developments at St. Patrick's, John's Hill, Waterford."

A written response from Mr Anna Marie Lanigan was circulated to members and acknowledged by Cllr. Davy Daniels.

In commenting on the response Cllr. Daniels noted that St. Patrick's Hospital is no longer a listed building as indicated. He advised that it had been delisted about three years ago by the Local Authority to expedite this project. He had been advised previously that the start date was Q4 2015 but now it is Q3 2016. In response Ms. Lanigan advised that she had been in discussion with Estates and that there had been delays at various stages. She agreed to check the timelines provided with Estates and advise Cllr. Daniels accordingly.

It was noted that the project involves more than the on site provision of a Community Nursing Unit.

## **6. Date and time of next meeting**

Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2015, at 2 pm, Council Chambers, County Hall, Cork.

The Chairman asked members to note the foregoing arrangements for the next meeting.