

REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

**Chairperson,
Cllr. Tim Lombard**

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MINUTES - MEETING OF REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM SOUTH

Thursday 20th June, 2013 @ 2.00pm
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, COUNTY HALL, CORK

Present:

Cllr. Liam Ahearn	Cllr. Tim Lombard - Chairperson
Cllr. Pat Burton	Cllr. Sean Lonergan
Cllr. John Carey	Cllr. Tom Maher
Cllr. Timmy Collins	Cllr. Barbara Murray
Cllr. Catherine Connery	Cllr. Dr. Sean McCarthy
Cllr. Brendan Cronin	Cllr. Arthur McDonald
Cllr. Tom Cronin	Cllr. Michael O'Brien
Cllr. Danny Crowley	Cllr. Bobby O'Connell
Cllr. John Joe Culloty	Cllr. Laurence (Cha) O'Neill
Cllr. Tony Dempsey	Cllr. John O'Sullivan
Cllr. Declan Doocey	Cllr. Hilary Quinlan
Cllr. Wayne Fennell	Cllr. Seamus Ryan
Cllr. Mary Hanna Hourigan	Cllr. Jerry Sullivan
Cllr. Denis Kennedy	Cllr. Jim Townsend
Cllr. Michael Kinsella	

Apologies: Cllr. John Buttimer
Cllr. Pat Cody
Cllr. Matt Griffin
Cllr. Mary Shields
Cllr. Ted Tynan

In Attendance:

- Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, A/Regional Director of Operations
- Mr. Richie Dooley, Area Manager, HSE Waterford/Wexford
- Mr. Ger Reaney, Area Manager, HSE Cork
- Ms. Anna-Marie Lanigan, Area Manager, HSE Carlow/Kilkenny and South Tipperary
- Ms. Deirdre Scully, Area Manager, Community Services, Cork
- Mr. Dermot Halpin, Regional Service Director for Children and Family Services, HSE South
- Ms. Angie O'Brien, Area Communications Manager, HSE South
- Ms. Sinéad Byrne, Manager, Regional Health Forum, South
- Regional Health Forum Office staff

1. Adoption of the Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 16th May 2013

At the proposal of Cllr. Liam Ahearn seconded by Cllr. Michael O'Brien, the Minutes of the Forum meeting held on Thursday 16th May 2013 were approved and adopted by members.

2. Chairperson's Correspondence

Cllr. Jim Townsend, Chairperson welcomed Members and Managers to the meeting. He informed members that Mr. Pat Healy was unable to attend and Mr. Michael Fitzgerald was deputising in Mr. Healy's place. Cllr. Townsend also welcomed Mr. Dermot Halpin, Regional Service Director for Children and Family Services, HSE South and outlined that Mr. Halpin would answer any queries in relation to Notice of Motion and Question submitted by Cllr. John Joe Culloty. He welcomed Cllr. Catherine Connery who has been nominated by Kilkenny County Council and is replacing Cllr. Dr. Patrick Crowley. Cllr. Townsend informed members that Professor John Higgins and Mr. John Cregan, HSE would be in attendance later to present on "The Establishment of Hospital Groups as a transition to Independent Hospital Trusts".

Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

As this meeting was the Annual General Meeting of the Regional Health Forum, Cllr. Townsend invited nominees from the floor for the position of Chairperson. Cllr. Liam Ahearn proposed Cllr. Tim Lombard and this was seconded by Cllr. Tom Maher. As there were no other proposals Cllr. Lombard was unanimously elected as Chairperson until the next annual meeting of the Forum.

Members joined in their thanks to Cllr. Townsend for his work and support during his tenure as Chairperson and for the changes he brought about to improve the workings of the Forum. Prior to vacating the Chair, Cllr. Townsend thanked the members for their support and also thanked the HSE officials, particularly Ms. Sinead Byrne, Forum Manager for all her help and support throughout the year. Cllr. Townsend highlighted a number of items that arose during his Chairmanship and paid particular tribute to the visit from Minister James Reilly.

Cllr. Tim Lombard then took the Chair. He thanked the outgoing chair and his proposer and seconder and sought nominations for the election of Vice Chairperson. Cllr. Bobby O'Connell was proposed by Cllr. Declan Doocey and seconded by Cllr. Wayne Fennell. As no other candidate was put forward for election, Cllr. O'Connell was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairperson for the next year. Cllr. O'Connell offered his full support to Cllr. Lombard as Chairperson and looks forward to working with him over the next year.

Mr. Michael Fitzgerald A/Regional Director of Operations referred to a press release circulated to members which outlined that the Public Appointments Service (PAS) on behalf of the HSE has recently concluded a recruitment process for five new National Directors and a Chief Financial Officer of the Health Service. Mr. Fitzgerald informed members that Mr. Pat Healy has been appointed as National Director of Social Care and explained that this process leads to a revised HSE Management Structure planned in conjunction with the new governance arrangements provided for in the Health Service Executive (Governance) Bill, 2012. He outlined that Mr Healy's replacement now titled Regional Director of Performance and Integration (RDPI) will be announced in the near future and members will be informed accordingly. In advance of the meeting, Cllr. John Joe Culloty raised an issue that he had spoken about publically on the radio earlier. This was regarding an incident which occurred in Tralee on Tuesday 18th June and ambulance waiting times. In consultation with the Chairperson and Mr. Michael Fitzgerald A/Regional Director of Operations, it was agreed that this item would be discussed next on the Agenda.

With regard to the incident in question, Mr. Fitzgerald explained that a statement had been issued from the National Ambulance Service and the HSE can confirm that a 999 call was received on 18th June 2013. The first emergency resource arrived at the scene 30 minutes after the 999 call was received.

He outlined that the National Ambulance Service is satisfied that the necessary protocols around responding to an emergency were adhered to in this case. Following an examination of the facts, the HSE can confirm that, despite the best efforts of Ambulance Control staff, there were challenges in establishing the exact location of the caller which led to a delay in locating the patient. The HSE extends its deepest sympathies to the family of the deceased infant. Mr. Fitzgerald referred to the issue surrounding response times which had also been detailed at the previous forum meeting. With regard to the recent centralisation of the control system, the National Ambulance Service have acknowledged that this change is significant but reassured that the service is constantly being quality assured.

Cllr. John Joe Culloty expressed his condolences to the family. While accepting that the modernisation of the Ambulance service is in line with best practice, he outlined concerns that the centralisation of the control system particularly for rural areas in Kerry is not working. He expressed the view that the information being given by the caller at the most critical time is being lost and feels that this will not work until postal codes are introduced.

Mr. Fitzgerald appreciating the comments outlined by Cllr. Culloty explained that the 8 control centres have now moved to one central system with a National GPS system to be introduced shortly which will facilitate the screening of calls. This is consistent with a best practice model and based on recommendations by HIQA. Cllr. Culloty accepting that protocols had been adhered to still feels that local knowledge is now lost and re-iterated that the centralisation of the control system will not work unless postal codes are introduced.

3. Committees

Members were informed that the next Committee Meetings will be held on Thursday 11th July 2013 in the Performance and Development Unit which has now moved to the administration building, St. Mary's Health Campus, Bakers Road, Cork. Members have been notified of this change already by letter and a map with directions will be included with the notification of the committee meetings nearer the time.

4. Notice of Motions

4(a) Cllr. John Joe Culloty moved the following Notice of Motion standing in his name:

"That the HSE provide parents with the findings from inspections carried out in Creches, and that these findings be made available on the HSE website."

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Dermot Halpin, Regional Service Director for Children and Family Services, HSE South. Mr. Halpin referred to recent media attention and a programme which raised serious concerns about the care of children in a number of crèches.

Mr. Halpin referred to the Child Care Act 1991, outlined the definition of a pre-school child and the services covered which are now more commonly collectively known as Early Years Services. These services cater for children in the 0-6 age group. He outlined the Child Care (Pre-School Services) (2) Regulations 2006 which provide for a notification process to the HSE by a person proposing to carry on pre-school services and provides for the supervision and inspection by the HSE of services that are notified.

With regard to pre-school inspections Mr. Halpin outlined that currently there are over 100,000 children in almost 5,000 notified child care centres. 2,644 routine inspections were undertaken by the HSE Children and Family Services in 2012, 612 of which were in the HSE South. Childcare services receive a visit from an inspection on average every 18-24 months compared to visits in the UK which only take place every 3-4 years.

Mr. Halpin outlined the planned reform programme to include the introduction of a registration system, roll out and implementation of a suite of seven Standard Operating Procedures and compulsory Garda Vetting. He explained that the National Pre-School Standards for full day services with all stakeholders across the sector are published and the HSE is awaiting the publication of the National Standards for part-time, sessional and childminders with publication hopefully later this year. There is also commitment to publish all Inspection Reports online in the coming months with technical arrangements being made. Mr. Halpin informed members that a review has been commissioned on the findings and outcomes of inspections undertaken from January 2012 to June 2013 and outlined the objectives of this analysis.

Cllr. John Joe Culloty thanked Mr. Halpin for his comprehensive response and welcomed the commitment to publish inspection reports online in the near future. Members commented on the importance of carrying out inspections, welcomed the planned reform programme and acknowledged the importance that should parents have concerns regarding the standard of service being provided in a childcare service that a copy of the most recent Inspection report can be requested. Staffing complement and qualifications to carry out Inspections were also referred to.

5. Questions

5(a) Cllr. John Joe Culloty put forward the following Question:

“How many unannounced inspections did the HSE South carry out in Creches in Kerry in the last 2 years? What were the findings, and how many Creches in Kerry is the HSE responsible for?”

A written response was circulated to members from Mr. Dermot Halpin, Regional Service Director for Children and Family Services, HSE South which outlined detailed information regarding notifications to the HSE South of Early Years Services currently in operation in the region, total numbers of inspections carried out in the last two years and specific information which was requested for the Kerry area. Cllr. Culloty thanked Mr. Halpin for his response and was happy with the information it contained and had no further questions.

Presentation on “The Establishment of Hospital Groups As a Transition to Independent Hospital Trusts” – Professor John Higgins

Professor John Higgins gave a presentation on The Establishment of Hospital Groups as a transition to Independent Hospital Trusts. He outlined the rationale for change, the vision, the benefits for patients and the benefits for staff. He explained the basic principle of the Hospital Group and ran through the composition of each of the six hospital groups and the Academic Partner for each. He outlined the governance of the transitional Hospital Groups and Leadership posts within the Groups and explained that the well functioning Hospitals Groups will transition to Hospital Trusts. Finally he ran through the recruitment of the Trust Chief Executive Officer which will entail open international competition through the Public Appointments Service (PAS).

The presentation was followed by a Question and Answer Session with the following items discussed/responded to:-

- Welcome of recommendations
- Inequity of resources for the South East
- Current alliance of St. Luke’s Hospital to Waterford Regional Hospital and continuation of traditional pathways
- Building of new Children’s Hospital in Dublin
- Concerns for Waterford Regional Hospital and use of x-ray facilities in Dungarvan
- Timeframe for the setting up and running of the Hospital Groups
- Recruitment of CEOs of those Hospital Groups

- Acknowledgement of the high standard of patient care in Ireland
- Provision of 24/7 Cardiology in Waterford Regional Hospital
- Palliative Care unit in WRH
- Patient having the choice of Care
- The size of Cork University Hospital Campus

6. Date and Time of next Meeting

The next meeting of the Regional Health Forum, South will be held on **Thursday 19th September 2013** at **2pm, Council Chambers, County Hall, Cork.**