

## **Minutes of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board**

**4 September 2025**

**-: Present :-**

Councillor Johns (Chairwoman)

Councillors Douglas-Dunbar and Foster

Non voting Co-opted Members

Amanda Moss (Chair of the Voluntary Sector Network)

(Also in attendance: Councillor Long)

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### **15. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Spacagna and Pat Harris.

### **16. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Board held on 6 August 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairwoman.

### **17. Healthwatch Annual Report 2025**

The Communications and Digital Lead for Healthwatch – Si Culley and Chair of Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay – Dr Kevin Dixon, presented the submitted Healthwatch Annual Report 2025.

The Board raised the following questions:

- how will people without access to digital technology be supported with completing online surveys;
- how does Healthwatch work with the Torbay Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS); and
- does Healthwatch Torbay receive some funding towards preventative work carried out.

Mr Culley and Dr Dixon provided the following responses:

- Healthwatch are holding conversations with the NHS regarding continuing to offer an in person service to help residents who do not have access digital technology and wish to speak to advisor face to face;

- Healthwatch have a good working relationship with Torbay PALS and where appropriate, residents complaints or issues are referred to PALS for action and response to both Healthwatch and the resident;
- collaborative work is carried out by Healthwatch with local housing associations, Councils and Citizens Advice on preventative work to help local residents with issues such as health and housing. Healthwatch expect contributions currently received to continue until it is known what the future of Healthwatch will look like. With positive changes to increase the use of digital methods used for community engagement, more messages can be promoted on how residents can work with Healthwatch.

Members welcomed the report and thanked Mr Culley and Dr Dixon for their presentation.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board notes the content of the Healthwatch Annual Report 2025; and
2. that the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board recommend to Cabinet that the Public Health funding provided to Healthwatch be included within the future years budget provision and if Healthwatch ceases, the funding should continue to be made available to ensure that engagement, coproduction and codesign continues in Torbay.

## **18. Public Health Annual Report 2025/26**

The Director of Public – Lincoln Sargeant and Public Health Consultant – Julia Chisnell, provided an overview of the submitted Public Health Annual Report 2025/26 and responded to questions.

The Board raised the following questions:

- was work being completed by Public Health to review the effects that cost of living is having on residents nutrition;
- were Public Health actively contacting local employers to discuss employment of residents aged over 50; and
- what work was being carried out to encourage age friendly communications between members of both the younger and older generations to work together.

The following responses were provided by the Director of Public Health and Public Health Consultant:

- the impact on nutrition from the cost of living was not something that was focused on specifically in the annual report. It is known that more residents of all ages in Torbay are visiting food banks, and food and fuel poverty were within the scope of the Turning the Tide on Poverty programme, and the Torbay Food Strategy;
- the Public Health team, in collaboration with Economy, NHS and Voluntary Sector partners, are supporting the Connect to Work programme, promoting

access to employment for all age groups, in particular those who are out of the workplace through long term health conditions or caring responsibilities. One recommendation of the Annual Report is to promote disability friendly working environments, and the Council is working on this as an employer; and

- within the Public Health Annual Report there were examples of work being carried out to promote inter-generational activities, recognising the benefits of this for all ages.

Resolved (unanimously):

That the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Board note the development of the Public Health Annual Report 2025/26.

## **19. Spotlight Review of Adult Safeguarding**

The Divisional Director of Adult Social Care – Gary Patch, along with the Head of Safeguarding Adults, Torbay – Jon Anthony and the Independent Chair of Torbay and South Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership – Paul Northcott, provided the background to the submitted Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership Annual Report 2023/24 and an overview of the submitted Safeguarding Adults in Torbay presentation which was circulated to the Board after the meeting, and responded to questions.

Members raised the following points:

- what action was taken to prevent ‘cuckooing’ to vulnerable residents who reside in Torbay;
- what action was taken to assist residents where there was evidence of self neglect;
- was the training provided to social workers, all online training or was there face to face training provided;
- were there reports received regarding residents who may be struggling with their mental health and stating that they no longer wish to live;
- how can the public report safeguarding concerns;
- does the Safeguarding Team investigate abuse that residents by receiving via social media; and
- if a resident engages with the safeguarding team and then no longer engages with the Team, how long do individual cases remain active.

The following responses were provided:

- ‘Cuckooing’ is now classed as an offence and is a contemporary theme which had become an emerging issue. The Safeguarding Team have developed an exploitation toolkit that can be used to provide assistance;
- the issue of self-neglect by residents is not an easy issue to resolve. The assistance is based around the social worker and the resident engaging with each other to build positive relationships throughout the process. Should residents not easily engage with their social worker, a multi-agency approach can be put into place to resolve the issues as social workers do not have the power to enter residents homes;

- all social workers have face to face training and part of the training consists of reflective group working and looking at previous case reviews to gain learning from. The training is provided in different formats, where the team look at opportunities beyond the formal training including a successful Prevention Conference that was held in 2024;
- for residents who may be struggling with their mental health, there is a mental capacity framework which is followed. The assessment completed by the social worker is unique to the individual and a multi-agency approach is used to create a care plan for the resident;
- the details of how members of the public can report safeguarding concerns are detailed on the Torbay and South Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership website see - [Home - Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership](#) New literature has been produced through coproduction and posters were being created to be displayed in various languages;
- the Safeguarding Adults Team carry out various multi-agency approaches including working with trading standards and have good relationships with the Money Lending Team, to assist with concerns reported from residents receiving abuse through social media channels. This assists with building and enabling partnership arrangements so that various partnerships are aware of the statutory duties of the Safeguarding Team and how to engage for assistance; and
- there is a case management system in place which enables the Safeguarding Team to track previously reported safeguarding concerns for residents and the Team use any intelligence provided by partnership agencies to work collaboratively.

Resolved (unanimously)

1. that the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board notes the content of the Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership Annual Report 2023/24;
2. that the Sub-Board receive 6 monthly updates on performance from the Chair of Torbay and South Devon Safeguarding Partnership; and
3. that the Director of Adults and Communities be requested to work with the Independent Chair of Torbay and South Devon Safeguarding Adults Board on public awareness, engagement and communication planning.

## **20. Annual Review of Building a Brighter Future Programme**

The Chief Strategy and Planning Officer – Simon Tapley, the Director of Capital Development and the Head of Communications and Engagement – Elisenda McCutcheon, for Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust, presented the submitted Annual Review of Building a Brighter Future Programme and responded to Members questions.

Members raised the following points:

- whether the delay with the proposed Nightingale Park Solar Farm was due to Torbay Council or Torbay and South Devon NHS Trust;
- if patients would be able to access their records through the new One Devon Electronic Patient Record system (Epic);
- whether new MYCARE app would be in addition to or to replace the NHS app;
- if the Annexe building was being used more to hold patients appointments and if smaller building were now being used more frequently;
- was the tower block being replaced after demolition; and
- how many wards were there in total within Torbay Hospital.

The following responses were provided:

- the Director of Capital Development had received draft energy costs from Torbay Council and was now waiting for final costs to be provided to allow for approval and the agreement to be signed off;
- the new Epic system would allow patients to be able to access their records and see the results of various tests;
- the MYCARE app is in addition to the NHS app provided by Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust. However, both apps would provide access to both systems;
- Torbay Hospital is reviewing with all departments how to provide the best care to the community utilising all hospital assets; and
- the demolition and replacement of the tower building was planned to be part of the redevelopment of the hospital including refurbishment of all wards. Due to the recent changes to the New Hospital Programme announced by the Government, which has delayed the proposed constructions works to the hospital until 2030, some remedial works had been carried out to the tower building to address some of the issues. The Director of Capital Development is continuing to speak with NHS England regarding the challenges being experienced at the hospital with the towers and the number of issues outstanding with the hospital wards, to ensure that the wards are continued to be maintained and welfare facilities are improved.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Director of Pride in Place be requested to provide final energy costs for the proposed Nightingale Park Solar Farm and work collaboratively with the Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust to reach agreement stage;
2. that the Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board provide a letter of support for Torbay and South Devon NHS Trust future estate funding to be sent to the Government;
3. that the Director of Capital Development be requested to provide a written response to confirm the various buildings being used for patient appointments; and
4. that the Chief Strategy and Planning Officer be requested to provide a written response to confirm the number of wards within Torbay Hospital building.

## 21. Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Action Tracker

The Sub-Board noted the submitted action tracker. The clerk provided the following updates:

**Action 1 for Minute 12/08/25: that the Integrated Care Board (ICB) notes the strength of concern from Torbay residents and considers how they can engage further with residents as they develop their case for change**

NHS Devon is very cognisant of the concerns raised from Torbay residents regarding the future of cardiology services. This is clear from communication that has been received from local people over the last few months related to the previous proposal that was withdrawn ahead of the NHS Devon Board in May and the feedback shared from those that attended the Torbay Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board meeting on 6 August 2025.

There are currently no proposals regarding cardiology services and the draft case for change, which covers the whole of Devon, will not contain any proposals. The case for change will describe the current and future needs of the local population, the provision of local services and the key challenges facing the health and care system that need to be addressed. The case for change will remain in draft form until the engagement programme is complete and findings have been considered, after which point a final version will be published.

Since the Torbay Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board meeting, 6 August, the NHS Devon Stakeholder Engagement and Public Affairs Manager has been working with Healthwatch Devon, Plymouth and Torbay to design an engagement programme which will allow patients, members of public, clinicians, elected representatives and other key stakeholders to provide their views on the draft case for change. This includes a discussion with the Heart Campaign in Torbay.

Once the draft case for change has been agreed, details of the engagement programme and how people can share their views will be shared and publicised.

**Action 2 for Minute 12/08/25: that the ICB be requested to provide the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board with details of who will be involved in engagement with the case for change so that they can be assured that all relevant groups are included and confirm the date that the case for change will be available for publication; and**

A Cardiology Review Group (CRG) will be established to lead the engagement programme, as well as monitor the 'in year' performance recovery of cardiology services that is required by commissioners. The programme will report to NHS Devon's Board and NHS England's Specialised Commissioning Board. An overarching 11-month timeline is proposed to ensure there is time to engage stakeholders in a meaningful manner.

A wide range of stakeholders will be involved in developing, reviewing and refining the draft case for change:

- **Clinicians** working across the whole patient pathway will be engaged, including through a Devon-wide clinical reference group. Independent and external clinical advice will also be sought
- **Overview and Scrutiny Committees** in Torbay, Devon and Plymouth. Once the draft case for change is published – we will then return to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in the Autumn to share the draft case for change for review, feedback and comment.
- **Public, patients and stakeholders from across Devon** – including those with lived experience, MPs, Healthwatch, the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) and a stakeholder reference group.

The cardiology draft case for change is currently being developed alongside the One Devon Health and Care Strategy. The Health and Care Strategy is due to be taken to the NHS Devon Board in October 2025 and the draft case for change will be published shortly after this Board meeting – an exact date has not been agreed.

**Action 3 for Minute 12/08/25: that the ICB be requested to engage with the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board as they develop their case for change and any other significant changes to health care affecting Torbay's residents and that appropriate professional colleagues be invited to the Sub-Board to give evidence.**

NHS Devon consider the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees across Devon as key partners to involve as part of the cardiology draft case for change development. If there were any significant changes to the delivery of healthcare that affected residents, Overview and Scrutiny Committee members will be key stakeholders to be involved in the conversation and NHS Devon would send the appropriate officers to present information/answer questions. It is proposed that NHS Devon will attend Torbay Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board again in the Autumn to present the latest information, answer questions and advise people how they can get involved in the draft case for change development process.

Chair

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