

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

**16 July 2026**

**-: Present :-**

Councillor Johns (Chairwoman)

Councillors Brook, Douglas-Dunbar, Fellows and Barbara Lewis

Non-voting Co-opted Members

Pat Harris (Healthwatch Torbay)

Amanda Moss (Chair of the Voluntary Sector Network)

(Also in attendance: Councillors Chris Lewis and David Thomas)

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### **14. Apologies**

It was reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Conservative Group, the membership of the Sub-Board had been amended to include Councillors Brook and Fellows in place of Councillors Bryant and Spacagna.

### **15. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Board held on 18 June 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **16. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **17. Building a Brighter Future - New Hospital Programme Update**

The Sub-Board received a presentation from Simon Tapley, Chief Strategy and Planning Officer and Steven Willisroft, Associate Director for Capital and Development, on the Building a Brighter Future – New Hospital Programme. Members were informed that the existing hospital estate continued to face significant challenges, including approximately £135 million of backlog maintenance and fire safety risks within the main tower block. These factors reinforced the need for a long-term redevelopment programme. Members also heard that substantial capital investment had already been secured, including completion of the £14 million Emergency Department improvement scheme. Further capital schemes were in development for future years, alongside progress on digital patient records and pathology services.

During discussion, Members referred to reports on social media regarding lengthy waiting times at the Emergency Department and expressed concern that some residents might delay seeking treatment as a result. Mr Tapley acknowledged this concern and advised that there had been instances where individuals had postponed attending the Emergency Department and had subsequently become more unwell before presenting for treatment. Members were advised that the Trust had experienced considerable pressures, particularly during periods of hot weather, with waiting times in the Emergency Department reaching around eleven hours at their peak.

Members also sought clarification on implementation of the electronic patient record system. In response, officers explained that whilst the new system had been implemented, there remained varying levels of digital confidence and engagement across hospital departments, and work continued to embed the system consistently across the organisation.

In discussing future healthcare provision, Members requested that further information on the Neighbourhood Health Plan Programme be reported to a future meeting. Officers agreed that an update would be brought back to the Sub-Board.

Resolved:

- 1) that the Building a Brighter Future – New Hospital Programme Update be noted;
- 2) that the Director of Adult and Community Services be requested to arrange for Members to visit the new Emergency Department at Torbay Hospital; and
- 3) that the Senior Democratic, Overview and Scrutiny Officer schedule a future update on the Neighbourhood Health Plan Programme for the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board.

#### **18. Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account 2025-26**

The Sub-Board received a presentation from Dr Rhoda Allison, Deputy Chief Allied Health Professional, regarding the Trust's Quality Account for 2025/26.

During debate, Members commented that whilst much of the information presented related to statutory reporting requirements, it was difficult to clearly identify how performance data demonstrated the impact of improvement activity. Members suggested that future reports should provide stronger links between priorities, outcomes and historical performance trends. Dr Allison accepted the observation and advised that consideration would be given to presenting this information more clearly in future editions of the Quality Account.

Members also questioned the position in respect of diagnostic waiting times, noting that performance remained significantly below the national target. Dr Allison explained that the Trust had experienced substantial increases in demand in some specialties and that estate limitations had also affected performance. Although waiting times had improved, they remained some distance from national expectations.

Members questioned how decisions were made regarding the selection of clinical audits. In response, Dr Allison advised that the Trust participated in all applicable national audits and that local audits were undertaken through established governance and partnership arrangements. She further explained that significant organisational focus over the previous year had been directed towards implementation of the electronic patient record system.

Members also discussed whether future reports could include information from staff surveys, particularly around staff wellbeing. Officers noted that such information was already reviewed at care-group level and agreed that consideration could be given to including more detail within future Quality Accounts.

Members queried whether the stillbirth figures included births occurring in hospital and following discharge to home. Dr Allison advised that she did not have the breakdown available at the meeting but believed that the majority of cases would have occurred in hospital. She agreed to provide further information in writing.

Resolved:

- 1) that the Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account 2025-26 be noted;
- 2) that the Senior Democratic, Overview and Scrutiny Officer request a written response regarding the location of reported stillbirths; and
- 3) that the Senior Democratic, Overview and Scrutiny Officer request and circulate to Members of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Members the most recent monthly monitoring information on DMO1 performance and ask that comments raised during the meeting be considered when preparing future reports.

## **19. CQC Adult Social Care Assessment Report and Improvement/Action Plan**

The Sub-Board received a quarterly update from Councillor David Thomas, Leader of the Council and Anna Coles, Director of Adult Social Care, on progress made against the Adult Social Care Improvement and Action Plan following the Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment.

Anna Coles reminded Members that Torbay had received an overall rating of Good following the CQC assessment, with inspectors identifying a number of strengths including person-centred practice, effective partnership working, strong support for unpaid carers, positive safeguarding arrangements and successful integration with health services through the long-standing Section 75 Agreement. The assessment had also highlighted areas requiring further development, particularly around governance, waiting times for reviews, data quality and performance reporting.

Anna Coles advised that the improvement plan had been developed to address those recommendations and that progress continued to be made across the

programme. She reported that most actions remained on track, although three workstreams were slightly behind schedule. These related to further development of the Section 75 arrangements, implementation of a strengthened supervision framework led by the recently appointed Principal Social Worker, and continued work on the practice model and day care services. She explained that these areas were complex pieces of work involving both cultural and operational change and therefore required careful implementation.

Members asked how the Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust was supporting the Council to deliver the improvement programme. Anna Coles responded that the Joint Governance Board had been extremely supportive and that resources had been committed by both organisations to drive improvement activity. She stated that significant work was ongoing to improve understanding of quality and performance information and to ensure that services could clearly demonstrate how they were meeting people's needs. She recognised the scale of the work but expressed confidence that the improvements underway would build on Torbay's positive CQC outcome and further strengthen adult social care services.

Members acknowledged the considerable work undertaken by officers and partners. The Sub-Board formally recorded its thanks to Anna Coles and her team for their leadership throughout the assessment process and ongoing improvement programme.

**Resolved:**

- 1) that the update on the CQC Adult Social Care Assessment Report and Improvement Action Plan be noted;
- 2) that an All-Member Briefing on transition arrangements and operational design of Adult Social Care be arranged during the autumn;
- 3) that the Director of Adult and Community Services liaise with the Democratic Services Team Leader regarding Member Development induction sessions on Adult Social Care governance and improvement; and
- 4) that the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board formally record its thanks to the Director of Adult and Community Services and her team for their work in securing the positive CQC assessment outcome and delivering the improvement programme.

**20. Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Action Tracker**

The Sub-Board noted the submitted action tracker.