

SHETLAND NHS BOARD

MINUTES OF THE AREA PARTNERSHIP FORUM HELD ON THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2020 *Meeting was held via MS Teams*

PRESENT

Ian Sandilands	Chair of APF and Employee Director (IS) (In the Chair)
Michael Dickson	Co-Chair of APF and Chief Executive (MD)
Cathrine Coutts	CSP Representative (CC)
Maurice Staples	Unite Representative (MS)
Julie Kidson	RCN Representative (JK)
Lorraine Hall	Director of Human Resources and Support Services (LH)
Bruce McCulloch	Unison Representative (BM)
Kathleen Carolan	Director of Nursing and Acute Services (KC)
Brian Chittick	Medical Director (BC)
Colin Marsland	Director of Finance (CM)
Marianne Williamson	PA to DHRSS/APF Administrator (note-taker) (MW)

IN ATTENDANCE

Carolyn Hand	Corporate Services Manager (CH)
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APF 20/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Lola Wild	RCM Representative (LW)
Freya Sewell	RCN Representative (FS)
Susan Webb	Director of Public Health (SW)
Carolyn Hallam	RCM Representative (CH)
Jo Robinson	Interim Director of Health and Social Care (JR)

APF 20/18 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 23 JANUARY 2020 AND TUESDAY 04 FEBRUARY 2020

Both sets of minutes were approved as an accurate record and there were no matters arising.

UPDATES FROM HR AND SUPPORT SERVICES DIRECTORATE

APF 20/19 PROMOTING ATTENDANCE/STAFF WELLBEING/DEPLOYMENT

This paper contained the usual promoting attendance update with the figures for April and the yearly rolling average. On both measures NHS Shetland is performing well nationally. One point to be noted is that since March we have seen a month on month increase in absence due to stress, anxiety and depression. This is something that will be monitored closely as the pandemic progresses and we move into the recovery phase. LH explained that during the pandemic Laura Pottinger in HR had collected daily absence figures which had allowed close monitoring. An example of the daily figures is included in the paper.

The paper also provided detail on the work that has been ongoing regarding staff wellbeing. This included the wellbeing area in the Sanctuary and the telephone support line. Forum

members were reminded to remind their staff and members about the services available and that the Endowment Committee is looking for bids for projects to aid staff wellbeing. LH also discussed plans by the Staff Development team to roll out 'Manager Reach Out' conversations

Also included was an update of the work done by the deployment team. This included the process used and the detail of the placements that were made to aid the Board's COVID response.

OUTCOME: APF noted the update.

APF 20/20 ACCELERATED RECRUITMENT PROCESS

LH presented the accelerated recruitment process that had been agreed by herself and IS at the outset of the pandemic. APF members were asked that they were content with this process. The aim of the accelerated process was to progress requests to recruit in a more timely manner. KC noted that she felt the process was working well. BC raised that where posts were a result of remobilisation/recovery and funding was not available from budgeted establishment then the BVC could go to the Strategic Recovery Group for discussion. This was supported by members.

OUTCOME: APF members were content with the Accelerated Recruitment Process and for posts related to remobilisation to go to the Strategic Recovery Group.

APF 20/21 HEALTH AND SAFETY SUMMARY

LH presented an update, prepared by Health and Safety Manager Jed Westmoreland. The Health and Safety Committee met remotely at the end of May where they reviewed Quarter 4 (January-March 2020) and the activity during the COVID pandemic. Lots of work has taken place including the large face-fit testing operation, development of risk assessments/guidance and toolkits to support new kinds of working.

BC also noted that Datix had been updated to allow risks to be classified as 'COVID-19'. He has continued to meet with the Clinical Governance and Risk Team on a weekly basis to monitor whether risks are COVID related and pick up Duty of Candor issues.

An increase in reported needlestick injuries has been seen and KC confirmed that the Infection Control Team are going to take the training package developed by Occupational Health to teams in the hospital.

OUTCOME: APF noted the update.

APF 20/22 EMPLOYEE RELATIONS-PRIORITISATION OF CASES

APF were presented with this draft process that was developed between LH and IS to ensure they were content with the management and handling of employee relations cases during the COVID pandemic and as we move forward into recovery. It was recognised that for the protection of the organization and the health and wellbeing of staff it was important that cases progressed and were resolved.

Members were supportive and KC noted that it was beneficial if we can sustain a shorter and more streamlined process.

OUTCOME: APF were content with the process.

APF 20/23 DRAFT STAFF GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN 2020/21 FOR APF INPUT/DISCUSSION

LH explained that this has been included to allow APF members to have a think and feed into the development of the Staff Governance Action Plan. Due to COVID a number of things have been carried forward from the 2019/20 plan (which is included in the agenda for noting).

There was an in depth discussion about apprenticeships and the need for NHS Shetland as an organisation to grow our own staff and be mindful of our responsibilities as Corporate Parents. Age profiles are growing across the Board and succession planning remains key. As the impact of COVID is felt in the local economy we may see unprecedented levels of unemployment in Shetland.

OUTCOME: Noted. LH asked members if they had anything that they would like to add to the plan then could they forward to her over the next couple of weeks.

LH wanted to note her thanks to the following staff for their contribution during the COVID pandemic:

- Laura Pottinger for her daily absence reports and for running the HR department during a period of high staff absence.
- Bruce McCulloch for his work in the Redeployment Team.
- Sally Hall for helping with the Wellbeing strand of work.
- Alison Mustard for her work in testing and developing the risk assessments
- Andy Kinnear for his work in the PPE store.

APF 20/24 FINANCE UPDATE

CM presented this finance update. He noted the following main points:

- Expenditure against the core Revenue Resource Limits (RRL) there is an under spend against budget of £38k for the financial year.
- The Board's overall costs in 2019-20 increased by £4,468k from 2018-19 which is a rise of 7.2%. The majority of this increase is attributable to pay costs that grew by £3,338k which is a 10.2% increase on last year.
- Appendix C shows on Island Acute Services has increased its share of resources overall which is partly attributable to increased locum staff. The "independent" contractor share has reduced but this is caused by a reduction in the Board's use of GP locums.
- In respect of the efficiency savings target for 2019-20 the Board achieved its target through a range of recurrent and non-recurrent schemes.

Members discussed the impact of COVID on the ability to financially plan for the next few years. CM explained that MD noted that a positive of COVID was that it allowed us the opportunity to look at how we do things. It will be a steady approach addressing the fundamental model of delivery.

IS queried whether if there is a move to carry out procedures at central locations to help with waiting lists we will receive financial help with travelling costs?

OUTCOME: APF noted the Finance Update.

APF 20/25 WORKING FROM HOME SURVEY- FEEDBACK

Carolyn Hand joined the meeting to discuss the results of the Working from Home survey that had been carried out. She explained the aim of the survey was to take a bit of a temperature check and identify any areas of concern. Also a chance to glimpse future preferences.

Points to note:

- Lots of praise for the IT Team
- Tackled issues raised in some responses about physical distancing
- Feedback quite polarised- some loved working from home, some really not enjoying
- Flexibility that home working offered was praised
- Many respondents hoped that in the future they could do a combination of work/home
- Some respondents missed the social interaction of the office environment and the corridor conversations.

Next steps are to reach out to Managers, ensuring that teams are doing ok and helping them to feel empowered to fix any issues that emerge.

Members also discussed the plans to make NHS Shetland a COVID safe workplace. Staff, that can, are encouraged to work flexibly supported by technology. Face to face meetings are avoided.

As we move into the 2nd Phase staff should still work from home if they can. As we reach 3rd Phase we aim for an agile workplace supported by technology. We will use the responses in the survey to help us develop plans for the future e.g you say, we did.

BM noted the helpful discussion and reported feedback from UNISON members was largely in line with the wider organization. It was positive how quickly the organization had adapted to the changes driven by COVID.

LH explained that work was ongoing nationally to determine national guidance on homeworking. At the current time there are no payments or expenses available to staff who are working from home. IS noted that this had been a discussion at the national Employee Director meeting.

Members discussed the issue of schooling and blended learning and the impact that this may have on staff. They recognised that it was a real concern for many staff and the variation across Shetland would make it difficult.

LH noted that the three areas of concern from a workforce perspective were:

- Education

- Shielding
- Quarantine

OUTCOME: APF noted the feedback from the survey.

APF 20/26 AREA PARTNERSHIP FORUM- TERMS OF REFERENCE

This was the two yearly update of the Terms of Reference. No changes had been made to the content of the ToR but the format had been adapted to be more in line with other Committees. Brian Chittick noted that the BDA wasn't listed. LH explained that this was taken from the Staff Governance Standard but any BDA rep would be welcomed if they wanted to join the forum.

OUTCOME: APF approved the Terms of Reference and they will move forward to Staff Governance Committee.

APF 20/27 CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME

Unfortunately Gareth Davies was unable to attend the meeting due to a bereavement. He had included some information on the scheme in the pack and had sent through some additional information. Members discussed the scheme and were supportive of its implementation. It was important that clear information was provided to staff on the financial implications of the scheme.

OUTCOME: APF is happy for the Cycle to Work Scheme to proceed with a lift on the £1k limit. Members ask that clear information is provided to staff on tax implications etc of salary sacrifice scheme

APF 20/28 ITEMS FOR NOTING

Agenda items 8, 9 and 10 were all noted by the Committee.

8. Final Staff Governance Action Plan 2019/20
9. List of Guidance and Circulars issued during the COVID-19 pandemic
10. HR&SS Directorate Contingency Plans

AOCB

APF 20/29 I-MATTER

IS raised a query on whether iMatter would take place this year. LH confirmed that it would more than likely be postponed this year. Discussion had taken place among HR Directors that there was a risk of survey fatigue with many Boards running COVID pulse surveys. A watered down iMatter survey would lose validity if different questions were used

APF 20/30 JOB EVALUATION

LH explained that the Job Evaluation process had restarted with panels taking place over TEAMS. One issue that has been emerging is the difficulty of finding national profiles to match against. LH asked APF to confirm that they were content for where there was no match points were tallied up to determine banding. This removes the need for a JAQ which further extends the process.

OUTCOME: APF confirmed they were content with this approach.

APF 20/31 STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Due to the revised governance arrangements that have been in place due to COVID-19 the May meeting of Staff Governance Committee was postponed. LH asked if members were content that a scaled down meeting of SGC took place as there would be significant crossover between attendees and papers. LH and IS would be present at both meetings.

APF confirmed they were content with this approach.

APF 20/32 CARE HOME ASSURANCE

KC updated members on work that was ongoing with the local authority on providing assurance in Care Homes. The Coronavirus Act indemnifies staff to work in different settings. There is a document in draft which is being developed with input from staff across all settings. LH confirmed that the Central Legal Office is content with the work that is being progressed.

APF 20/33 UNIFORM POLICY

CC raised a query about the communication that had gone out this week relating to the Uniform Policy. KC explained it was a gentle prompt to remind staff that if they were going out for a walk to cover up with a light covering (like a cardigan) and ensuring that they were physically distancing.

CC also raised a concern about the wider issue of those staff who were shielding and were required to work from home. She was aware that some of them felt that there was a perception that they were not doing enough. MD said that the work of all staff was valued and noted that the pandemic had meant a culture shift.

APF 20/34 NHS ONCE FOR SCOTLAND WORKFORCE POLICIES

IS wanted to take the opportunity to remind members about the Once for Scotland Workforce Policies that came into force in February. It was essential that Managers with a people requirement in their role understood and engaged with the policies. Following a discussion it was decided that IS would discuss with Lorraine Allinson and look at work that can be done to engage with and remind managers about the policies.

The next meeting of APF will take place on Thursday 27 August 2020 at 2pm. Members agreed that this would again take place via Microsoft Teams.