

11/01/1990

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EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

**Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting
held on**

Thursday 11th January, 1990 at 6.00 p.m.

In

The Boardroom, St. Mary's Hospital, Chapelizod, Dublin 20.

Present

Sen. O. Bennett	Mrs. B. Bonar
Cllr. B. Briscoe, T.D.	Cllr. I. Calley, T.D.
Cllr. M. Carroll	Dr. R. Corcoran
Mrs. D. Clune	Dr. P. Devitt
Cllr. J. Dillon Byrne	Cllr. P. Dunne
Cllr. B. J. Durkan, T.D.	Ald. A. FitzGerald
Cllr. Dr. D. Fitzpatrick T.D.	Cllr. C. Flood, T.D.
Cllr. M. Gannon	Cllr. A. Glenn
Cllr. A. Groome	Dr. R. Hawkins
Cllr. P. Hickey	Cllr. F. Hynes
Dr. D. I. Keane	Cllr. T. Keenan
Dr. P. McCarthy	Prof. J. McCormick
Mr. G. McGuire	Dr. J. Masterson
Cllr. C. Murphy	Ms. M. Nealon
Dr. J. O'Boyle	Dr. B. O'Herlihy
Cllr. L. O'Neill	Cllr. J. Reilly
Cllr. R. Roche, T.D.	

Apologies

Prof. J. S. Doyle, Cllr. W. J. Harvey

In the Chair

Cllr. A. Groome

Officers in Attendance

Mr. K.J. Hickey, Chief Executive Officer
Mr. F. Donohue, Programme Manager, Special Assignments
Mr. J. Doyle, A/Programme Manager, Community Care
Mr. S. O'Brien, A/Programme Manager, General Hospital Care
Mr. M. Walsh, A/Programme Manager, Special Hospital Care
Prof. B. O'Donnell, Dublin Medical Officer of Health
Mr. M. Gallagher, Finance Officer
Mr. G. Brennan, Technical Services Officer
Ms. M. Kelly, A/Personnel Officer
Mr. M. O'Connor, Secretary

**1/1990
CONDOLENCES**

On the proposal of the Chairman, votes of sympathy were passed with the following:-

1. Cllr. Jim Reilly, on the death of his father.
2. Fred Donohue, Programme Manager, on the death of his brother.
3. Matt O'Connor, Secretary, on the death of his mother.
4. Paddy McKeever, Ambulance Driver, St. Columcille's Hospital on the death of his daughter.
5. Mrs. Imelda Hardiman, Cleaner, 1 James's St., on the death of her father.
6. The family of Mr. Anthony Burke, Ambulance Attendant, James's St., Dublin 8.
7. The family of Ms. Annie Greene, Domestic, Clonskeagh Hospital.
8. The family of Mrs. Lilian McMenamain, Dental Surgeon, Dental Clinic, Blackrock.
9. The family of Mr. John Dwyer, Attendant, James Connolly Memorial Hospital.
10. The relatives and friends of Cllr. Sean Walsh, Chairman, Dublin County Council, who had been a member of the Dublin Health Authority.

**2/1990
CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON
14TH DECEMBER, 1989**

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on 14th December, 1989, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr. Callely, seconded by Dr. Keane.

(a) Matters arising from the minutes

Following a discussion on the prospects of a resolution of the current difficulties in the arrangements for the overall management of services at Cheeverstown House, to which Dr. Masterson, the Chairman, Deputy Briscoe, Mr. McGuire, Deputy Flood, Cllr. Hynes and Cllr. Gannon contributed, it was agreed unanimously on a proposal by Deputy Flood, seconded by Cllr. Gannon, that the Minister for Health should be formally contacted and requested to complete the initiatives which he had indicated he had undertaken in this regard.

3/1990

QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

On a proposal by Deputy Callely, seconded by Dr. Hawkins, it was agreed to answer the questions which had been lodged.

Cllr. L Callely, T.D.

"Can the Chief Executive Officer please advise what steps have been taken to provide 'Care Units' for the elderly in our community further to the report before our Board in October 1988?"

Reply

Progress on the provision of Community Care Units for the elderly has been as follows:-

- (i) to date a number of sites have been identified some of which have already been acquired where not already owned by our Board.
- (ii) detailed policy proposals were adopted by our Board in April 1989 in response to the Minister's request, following the publication of the Report "The Years Ahead" and its acceptance as future Government policy for the elderly. The proposals submitted by our Board included the provision of 5 community care units for the elderly in the medium term.
- (iii) our proposals for community care units are being actively pursued further in the context of:-
 - (a) our Board's decision regarding the application of the proceeds of the sale of the Navan Road property to supplement central capital funds.
 - (b) the indications and request in the letter from the Department of Health dated 7th December on the subject of our financial allocation for 1990
 - (c) the Minister's statement following his meeting with the Chief Executive Officers of the health boards earlier this week.

2. Cllr. Dr. D. Fitzpatrick, T.D.

"What is the up to date situation on the Worth Library in Dr. Steevens Hospital?"

Reply

Our Board has formally declared itself an interested party in connection with a High Court application on this matter. Informal discussions have taken place with the other parties concerned. Our Board's sub-committee will be kept advised of any further developments."

4/1990

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer read the following report, which was noted by the Board:-

"1. International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs Act, 1987

I have circulated, with the papers for this meeting, copies of letter dated 20th December, from the Department of Health enclosing the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs Act, 1987, under which the Minister for Health has formally consented to our Board being specified as an appointing authority for inspectors under the above Act.

2. *Medical Preparations (Amendment) Regulations 1989*

I have circulated, this evening, a copy of a Circular letter dated 8th January, 1990 enclosing copies of the following Amendment Regulations made on the 19th December, 1989:-

- (a) Medical Preparations (Licensing, Advertisement and Sale) (Amendment) Regulations, 1989.
- (b) Medical Preparations (Wholesale Licences) (Amendment) Regulations, 1989.

The implications for us of our Board's role under these Regulations are being studied and will be reported to the Community Care Programme Committee.

3. *Exceptional demands for services in December 1989*

The Minister for Health met with the Chief Executive Officers of health boards on Monday last 8th January to review the situation arising from the above. I have circulated this evening for the information of members a copy of the statement issued by the Minister following the meeting.

The situation in our Board's area was dealt with as follows:-

Hospitals

All hospitals, particularly the six Dublin Accident & Emergency hospitals, experienced exceptional demands for emergency admissions from mid-December onwards into the first week in January. This was at a time when, over the Christmas period, hospitals would normally be reducing their activity and manning levels. The following table shows the level of A & E admissions into the hospitals for each week in December and into the first week in January.

Week Ending	Table Total Number of A & E Admissions
03/12/89	788
10/12/89	875
17/12/89	1058
24/12/89	1070
31/12/89	1137
07/01/90	973

The peak was reached between Christmas Day and New Year's Eve and admissions during that week were 44% higher than for week ending 3rd December, 1989.

I am pleased to say that all hospitals responded flexibly and effectively to the exceptional demands placed on them. Beds available from the normal planned reduction in work over the Christmas period were brought into use together with additional beds as necessary. Staff numbers were affected by the prevailing illness but other staff either voluntarily cancelled their leave or agreed to be re-rostered for extra hours as required.

I believe a well deserved tribute is due to all concerned.

Ambulance Service

Our Board's ambulance service also worked under considerable pressure during December and there was total staff co-operation in either cancelling leave or revising work schedules at short notice.

Community Care Services

An increased demand for nursing and home help services during December and over the Christmas holiday period in particular was reported in each of our community care areas.

Our staff were able to cope with these demands and provided cover for essential service needs right through the Christmas holiday period. Some areas had calls from people living at a distance from Dublin who were concerned about their elderly relatives living alone and these were attended to and assurances given.

Our geriatric and psycho-geriatric services have experienced considerable pressure and I am satisfied that they are coping to the limit of their capacity. The knock on effects of the recent emergency as regards services for the elderly need to be addressed and this aspect of the matter which was discussed at the meeting between the Minister and the Chief Executive Officers on Monday last is covered in the statement issued.

In relation to our own services I feel that an expression of appreciation to all staff involved is also well deserved.

Monitoring of Situation

We are continuing to keep the situation under review, both directly as regards our own services and in consultation with the Dublin hospitals.

The Minister has indicated his intention of holding an early meeting with the Eastern Health Board and the major Dublin voluntary hospitals to discuss the functioning of acute hospital services in the Dublin area.

National Lottery Proceeds 1989

I have circulated, with the papers for the meeting, copies of letter dated 20th December from the Secretary of the Department of Health regarding allocations from the National Lottery Proceeds 1989 for a number of projects in our Board's area.

I have also circulated, this evening, for the information of members, copies of letter dated 5th January, 1990 from the Department of Education notifying us of an allocation of £60,835 from the National Lottery for projects for disadvantaged youth under the aegis of our Board.

5. *Newspaper Reports on St. Brendan's Hospital*

I wish to refer to a letter which appeared in the Irish Times on 10th January, 1990 and to a report which appeared in the Irish Independent on 11th January, 1990 regarding conditions at St. Brendan's Hospital. In view of the seriousness of the allegations in the letter and report I requested Prof. O'Donnell, Dublin Medical Officer of Health, to examine and Report on the Units referred to. I will now ask Professor O'Donnell to Report to the members on his visit to St. Brendan's Hospital."

Prof. O'Donnell informed the members that he had paid an unexpected visit to Units 8A and 3A in St. Brendan's Hospital on 11th January, 1990 and that, generally speaking, he had found conditions in both units to be quite satisfactory.

The members joined with the Chairman in expressing their thanks to all the staff for their response in the difficult situation which had pertained during the last few weeks.

5/1990

PROGRESS REPORTS FROM PROGRAMME COMMITTEES

1. *Special Hospital Care Programme Committee*

On a proposal by Mrs. Clune, seconded by Deputy Callely, it was agreed to adopt the report.

The following matters were dealt with in the report:

- (a) Closure of Lower House, St. Brendan's Hospital
- (b) Progress Report December 1989 - towards the rationalisation of services and development of alternative community based structures
- (c) A recommendation regarding the utilisation of the proceeds from the sale of properties.

During a discussion on the proposal regarding the utilisation of the proceeds of disposals of property, Cllr. Dillon Byrne indicated that it was not correct to say that she was prepared to second the second part of the motion and that she did not wish to be so recorded. It was agreed that the recommendation should be referred back to the Special Hospital Committee for further consideration.

With regard to the general question of our capital requirements the Chief Executive Officer stated that a review of all our capital priorities and related funding requirements was under way on which he would be presenting a report to the Budget Working Group, initially, in the near future.

Mr. McGuire stated that he wished to express his regret in relation to the manner in which the Lower House at St Brendan's Hospital had been closed.

Dr. O'Boyle stated that he had been concerned for some time regarding conditions in the Lower House and that he fully supported its closure. Mrs. Clune expressed her agreement with the sentiments expressed by Dr. O'Boyle.

Following a discussion to which Mrs. Bonar, Deputy Briscoe and Cllr. Glenn contributed, the Chief Executive Officer and Mr. Walsh, Programme Manager, Special Hospital Care informed the members regarding the detailed planning, and implementation of the plans, for the closure of the Lower House, regarding which members had been kept up to date on a regular basis at meetings of the Special Hospital Care Programme Committee and which was generally regarded as a very positive move of patients to superior accommodation.

2. General Hospital Care Programme Committee

On a proposal by Deputy Callely, seconded by Dr. Keane, it was agreed to adopt the report.

The following matters were dealt with in the report:

- (a) Progress report on the Psychiatric Unit/Boiler House and Ancillary Accommodation at Naas General Hospital.
- (b) Report on meeting with Minister for Health on 13th December, 1989 regarding development of Naas General Hospital.
- (c) Consultant Anaesthetist appointments, M.A.N.C.H./Naas Hospitals.
- (d) Consultant Orthopaedic posts, St. Columcille's Hospital.
- (e) Development of laboratory services for St. Columcille's Hospital.
- (f) E.N.T. services, James Connolly Memorial Hospital.
- (g) Consultant posts, James Connolly Memorial Hospital.
- (h) Transfer of patients to Cuan Aoibheann, St. Mary's Hospital.
- (i) 24 - hour Accident & Emergency service.
- (j) Report on services in St. Columcille's Hospital.

Dr. O'Herlihy referred to the Committees recommendation that a joint meeting of the three Programme Committees should be held to discuss services for the elderly in South East Dublin.

The Chief Executive Officer stated that the recommendation was equivalent to requesting a special meeting of the Health Board, two of which had been held during the last year to consider services for the elderly. Priority proposals for services for the elderly would also be the subject of a report to the special meeting to consider our allocation for non-capital health expenditure for 1990, to be held on 18th January, 1990.

It was agreed that there was no immediate need to arrange a further Special Board meeting on services for the elderly and that this could be reviewed again in 2 or 3 months.

a *Community Care Programme Committee*

On a proposal by Deputy Callely, seconded by Cllr. Dunne, it was agreed to adopt the reports of the meeting held in Area no. 5 (Cherry Orchard Hospital] on 23rd November, 1989 and the special meeting held in St. Mary's Hospital on 4th January, 1990.

The following matters were dealt with in the reports:

- (a) Realignment of Community Care area boundaries.
- (b) Report on services in Area 5.
- (c) Report on Dental services.
- (d) Sexual abuse of children - a review of cases.

6/1990

NOTICES OF MOTION

1. The following motion was proposed by Deputy Dr. Fitzpatrick and seconded by Cllr. Dunne:-

That aHomemaker Service be set up in Area 6."

Dr. Fitzpatrick indicated that he would be happy to receive a report on his proposal.

2. The following motion was proposed by Cllr. Dillon Byrne and seconded by Cllr. Carroll:-

That the alarm system installed in KiJbegnet's Close, Dalkey, Community Care Area No. 1 be connected and made junctional forthwith."

Cllr. Dillon Byrne stated that she was pleased to hear that the system had become operational before Christmas. The Programme Manager, General Hospital Care, will write to her giving some further details which she requested.

3. The following motion was proposed by Deputy Durkan, seconded by Cllr. Carroll, and agreed:-

That this Board will ensure that all hospital units within its administrative area be made fully aware of the necessity to pay special attention to all patients admitted to hospital suffering from head injuries and that no such pattern be discharged prior to observation."

It was agreed that the terms of the resolution would be communicated to each of the hospitals in our area and to Comhairle na nOspideal who were currently reviewing neurosurgical services.

4. The following motion was proposed by Deputy Callely and seconded by Cllr. Dunne:-

"That the Eastern Health Board, as the statutory authority for the delivery of health services in its functional area, recommends to the Minister for Health that funding for all voluntary hospitals in its area should be made through the Health Board."

Following a discussion to which Deputy Callely, Cllr. Dunne, the Chairman, Dr. Masterson and Deputy Briscoe contributed, it was agreed to adopt the motion and to consider it further in conjunction with the Report of the Commission on Health Funding.

5. The motion in the name of Deputy Roche regarding the diversion of funds from the sale of assets and from the disposal of surplus property to the building of a new Health Centre at Bray was deferred to the February meeting.

7/1990

CORRESPONDENCE

There were two items of correspondence, as referred to in the Chief Executive Officer's Report.

The meeting concluded at 8.00 p.m.

Correct **K.J. Hickey,**
 Chief Executive Officer.

CHAIRMAN