

Report of Secretary for Scotland to Guild Council Meeting 13/7/11

Apologies

I must give my apologies for this meeting as I cannot attend due to a family birthday.

Group Meetings

There have been no meetings since my last report to Council.

In the Press

26/05/2011 In his first major policy speech to the Parliament since being re-elected as First Minister, Mr Alex Salmond said "Already within the Scottish Government, we have secured a no compulsory redundancy deal. Our commitment is to extend this first to the tens of thousands of workers in our NHS, before working to ensure no compulsory redundancies across the public sector. For Scotland's patients, our commitment to protecting the health budget is all about delivering the better and faster treatment we know they seek."

31/05/2011 Patients across Scotland will wait no longer than 18 weeks from GP referral to treatment by December was the pledge made by Cabinet Secretary for Health, Nicola Sturgeon, during her first visit to a hospital since re-appointment. The first statistics measuring progress to 18 weeks Referral for Treatment (RTT) were also published and show that in the last quarter 85 per cent of patients who will be covered by the new waiting times target are already having their treatment within the timeframe. The referral to treatment waiting time target of 18 weeks from GP referral to treatment is due to be delivered by December 2011.

23/6/2011 According to a new report, hospitals in *NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde* are the worst maintained in the country. In the first assessment of its kind, the fabric of hospital buildings was graded by a team from Health Facilities Scotland. Scotland's largest health board was given the worst score for looking after the fabric of its hospital estate, with damaged floors, door frames, missing light covers, broken tiles and dirty vents among the problems identified. *Gartnavel General Hospital*, which opened in 1973, was the only hospital in the country to be given a red rating for the condition of the building, which indicates a score below 70%. Two boards were in the amber category, behind the rest of the NHS - *Greater Glasgow and Clyde* on 86.2% and the *State Hospital at Carstairs*, with 89.4%. *Gartnavel General* was given the lowest score of any hospital at 68.7%. There was little detail given in the report about the problems.

30/6/2011 The **Christie Commission Report** was published and called for a major shake-up of the public sector. The report said the intense pressure on public spending means a radical change in the design and delivery of public services is necessary, irrespective of the economic challenges, and noted "serious shortcomings" in the capacity of public services as they are currently organised. It stated that work to reform them must be "urgent sustained and coherent".

It called for an end to duplication of services and more emphasis on preventive spending to reduce the 40% of all public service budgeting which goes on interventions that could have been avoided by prioritising a preventive approach. The report noted that a switch to preventive spending was likely to be controversial but saw it as essential to help the long-term sustainability of public services.

It identified the integration of health and social services as an area in which big savings could be made by cutting the number of unplanned admissions of older people to hospital.

The commission made no estimate about how many job losses there would be through ending duplication and increasing efficiency, but Mr Christie said: "If we can deal with the people whose jobs are made redundant, as it were, it just doesn't make sense to have duplication because we can't face up to how we redeploy the staff."

Dr Roger Gibbins, former chief executive of NHS Highland and a member of the commission, added: "The number of people employed in public services is going to be determined by the amount of money available. That number is going to reduce. It's reduced over the past couple of years and it will continue to reduce."

The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), praised it as a "very good report" and said they would move immediately to implement its recommendations on early intervention, benchmarking improved performance and strengthening community planning.

4/7/11 It was reported *NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde* is seeking to shed more than 30% of secretarial posts. This was among about 500 proposals discussed by board members to reduce expenditure. Managers hope to save £8.7m by redesigning the layout of some hospital and community health services, including a proposal to shut the children's ward at the *Royal Alexandra Hospital* in Paisley.

Accelerating existing plans to centralise treatment and diagnostic departments, including the creation of a single site for ENT surgery and a reduction in the number of laboratories is hoped to save a further £8.8m

Meeting the Scottish Government's target of a 25% reduction in the number of managers and the Board's plan to reduce administrative jobs by one-third should save £4.6m.

AfC

It has been reported that the remaining *NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde* pharmacy staff have received letters detailing the outcome of reviews. *NHS Lothian* reviews still continue.

Unlicensed Medicines Review

Work continues on the business case for a single site for the manufacture of unlicensed medicines in Scotland.

Other

I have dealt with a number of member queries, one new membership and one new PII application.

Colin Rodden

7.7.11