

REPORT OF THE
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
PART II

180. INQUIRIES RECEIVED AND TAKEN

The Committee continues to receive and respond to inquiries about NHS services from County Councillors and partners. At the meeting on 24 May 2011 the following key items were considered:

1. Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

The Chief Executive of the Trust attended the Committee to provide an update on progress with the proposed merger with Winchester and Eastleigh NHS Trust (WEHT). As this work proceeds emphasis will be placed on providing services as locally as possible and integrating services currently provided in both hospitals. Early discussions were progressing well and it was hoped that the integration of the two hospitals would begin in early 2012. Some issues still required resolution, including the affordability of some services provided at WEHT. There was a strong commitment to working with local elected members and the public as these discussions progressed. An update on progress will be reported to the Committee in September 2011.

2. NHS Hampshire: Odiham Cottage Hospital

Representatives of NHS Hampshire and key local stakeholders updated the Committee on progress with identifying options for providing services at Odiham Cottage Hospital. The notice period served by Southern Health for the provision of inpatient beds expires on the 31 July 2011. The Committee noted that there remained significant differences of view about progress achieved and continuing concern within the local community about the engagement process led by NHS Hampshire.

Although not involved in the early discussions the Calleva GP Commissioning Consortium had been instrumental in producing a model of care that all agreed was a potential way forward. This required further development and was not sufficiently detailed for the Committee to formally consider as a service variation. It was not clear whether this model of care would enable services to be provided at Odiham Cottage Hospital in the future. The Committee expressed disappointment that plans for health services in the area remained tentative and there were no substantial proposals to be considered in terms of formal consultation.

Local stakeholder representatives were concerned about the planned cessation of inpatient services at Odiham Cottage Hospital in July and suggested that the NHS could extend the current service until the Calleva Commissioning Consortium had developed the new model of care. The Committee agreed and requested that the NHS Hampshire give further

consideration to an extension of at least some services at the Cottage Hospital, highlighting the importance of end of life care in particular. NHS Hampshire declined this request on the grounds of patient safety but had ensured that alternative arrangements for patients were in place, including access to community hospital beds at Fleet and Alton.

The Committee was mindful that the option existed to refer the decision of NHS Hampshire to the Secretary of State for Health. The local stakeholders present agreed that until the model of care was fully developed the future use of the hospital would remain unclear, however it was important that whatever the ultimate decision, it should be local people and local GPs who make it. The Committee accepted that a referral at this juncture would not halt the notice period on the beds and would take the decision out of the hands of local people. It could also result on delay to the development of the model of care by the Calleva Commissioning Consortium. The Committee agreed this would not be the correct action at this point in time.

The Calleva Commissioning Consortium confirmed its firm commitment to the development of the new model of care as quickly as possible, working with local people and GPs. It was anticipated that this work and the supporting business case would be advanced enough to be shared with the Committee at its meeting in September. It was resolved that this proposal be accepted and that Calleva and NHS Hampshire attend the Committee in September to provide this information.

181. PROPOSALS TO VARY OR DEVELOP NHS SERVICES

The Committee is continuing to receive proposals from the NHS to substantially vary or change the provision of health services. At its last meeting on 24 May 2011 consideration was given to the following items:

1. Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust: proposals to modernise older people's mental health services in south Hampshire.

Southern Health NHS FT (formerly Hampshire Partnership) confirmed that formal consultation on this proposal had commenced and would conclude on 17 June 2011. The Trust provided information about the five consultation events that were taking place during May at different venues in Southampton and areas within the south of the county. Early feedback indicated some concerns about transportation for services users, relatives and carers and as a result the Trust had accepted an invitation from Eastleigh Borough Council to discuss options to improve the situation. The Committee will be apprised of the outcome of the consultation process at its meeting on the 25 July 2011.

2. National Specialist Commissioning Group: Proposals to Reconfigure Children's Cardiac Surgery.

The Panel appointed by the Committee to scrutinise this matter had visited the Southampton Unit providing these services and held a formal evidence

day on 26 May 2011. The initial response of the Panel to the consultation on these services was based on the following four key lines of inquiry:

- The evidence base supporting the proposals
- The need for quality of care, not access, to be given priority in assessing the options for change
- The need to take account of children who have rare or complex conditions
- The importance of choice, not post code, in determining which centre a child attended.

The initial findings of the Panel were sent to the National Specialist Commissioning Group before the public consultation deadline and shared with all Members. It was noted that although the public consultation would close on the 1 July 2011 the Committee had a further 4 months to formally respond to the proposals.

The responses made by the Committee influence and improve the delivery of health services in Hampshire and, in doing so, support the Corporate Strategy aim of maximising well being.

Further details can be found at www.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings.htm by typing in the relevant reference number:

- Inquiries received and action taken (search item reference 2969)
- Proposals to develop or vary NHS Services (search item reference 2970)

COUNCILLOR PAT WEST
Chairman