

REPORT OF THE
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
PART II

32. INQUIRIES RECEIVED AND ACTION TAKEN

The Committee continues to receive and respond to inquiries about NHS services from County Councillors and partners. At meeting held on 30 July 2013 the following key items were considered:

A. Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS FT: Adult Mental Health services

1. The Committee were informed of proposals to re-locate an adult mental health wellbeing centre, which provides services to the population of North East Hampshire, from Frimley Children's Centre in Surrey to a location in North East Hampshire.

2. The Trust had been in the process of exploring a number of options for the re-location of this service, and in line with the Joint Mental Health Strategy, it was planned in future to co-locate the service with intervention teams in either Aldershot or Farnborough. It was stated that this service would be re-located rather than redesigned, and the Trust would be continuing engagement with service users and commissioners as proposals were developing.

3. It was resolved that the Trust provide more detailed information regarding the proposed re-location and changes to travel times at a future meeting of the Committee, as Members were unable to come to a conclusion on the nature of the change until such time as this information was made available by the Trust.

B. Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust: Romsey Community Hospital

1. The Committee heard from representatives of Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust regarding their intention to temporarily close Romsey Community Hospital to inpatient admissions for six weeks in September and October 2013, in order to enable the completion of urgent building works. The Trust reported that these proposed building works were part of a wider programme of work due to commence in 2014.

2. Members noted that asbestos had been identified, and so for health and safety reasons the temporary closure of the inpatient wards would be required. In this time period the Trust would be commissioning eight new beds in Lymington Hospital for step-down care, supported by Romsey staff. A bus service would be made available to those without transport wishing to travel to Lymington whilst Romsey was temporarily closed.

3. The Committee resolved to support the temporary closure of the Hospital and to be kept informed of further building works at a future Committee meeting.

33. PROPOSALS TO VARY OR DEVELOP NHS SERVICES

The Committee is continuing to receive proposals from the NHS that may substantially vary or change the provision of health services. At its last meetings on 30 July 2013, consideration was given to the following items:

A. Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust: Adult Mental Health

1. The Committee received in July details of the evaluation process held prior to and following the major service redesign of adult mental health services in Hampshire, which had taken place since April 2012
2. Members had monitored the implementation of adult mental health proposals since May 2012, and had requested that the Trust report to the Committee on the evaluation of the changes, which would compare a number of outcome measures from before and after the implementation of proposals. The aim of the evaluation project was to provide a robust and detailed independent review of the impact of the service redesign. A number of questions were posed by the review, and key learning would enable the Trust to streamline pathways of care and improve access into the service for GPs.
3. In addition, the Committee received the most recent data figures for inpatient bed use in the system, which showed that demand had regularly exceeded capacity in the most recent months. The Adult Mental Health working group of the HOSC had previously recommended to the Trust that all breaches in bed capacity were notified to the Committee; therefore the Committee were disappointed that the Trust had not raised the issue of bed capacity with them prior to the July meeting. In discussion, the Trust reasserted its commitment that beds will always be found for service users that require them, through using contingency beds elsewhere in the service, or by purchasing private beds.
4. Representatives from the Trust explained that there was enormous pressure on acute services across the NHS, and the operation of the adult mental health service was sensitive to changes in the wider system. The Trust stated that they believed that bed blocking was a problem in the system, and that work was taking place to identify how services users could be enabled to vacate beds once they no longer had a clinical need for inpatient services.
5. Some Members of the Committee challenged the Trust on cost saving within the NHS, and asked whether changes to mental health services were driven by the need to save money rather than the improvement of services for patients. Representatives of the Trust were robust in stating that this change in service would have been proposed regardless of the economic climate, as Southern Health were confident that these changes were best for patients, given that service users prefer to receive care within their own home.
6. The Committee resolved that the Chairman and Vice Chairman meet with Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust to review the most recent bed data associated with inpatient adult mental health services. Members agreed that adult mental health services would remain on the work programme until such time as the Committee is satisfied with the new adult mental health model of care.

B. South Eastern Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group: Chase Community Hospital

1. Representatives of South Eastern Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group, together with colleagues from Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, updated Members on progress made with planning the redevelopment of the Chase Hospital site, and the move to the new model of care in the area.

2. Members noted that continuing dialogue with GPs was seen as a priority by the Clinical Commissioning Group, and Members were reassured that the Trust would continue to meet with GP practices on an individual basis to ensure involvement and feedback by local GPs in the project.

3. A project deadline of April 2015 had been set by the Clinical Commissioning Group, and Members heard that they were confident that work would be completed to meet the finish date.

4. Free transport would be made available to relatives and carers wishing to visit patients placed in the commissioned beds at nursing homes local to the Whitehill and Bordon area as part of the new model of care. Members noted that the NHS would be looking to expand health provision on the hospital site and discussions to facilitate services were underway. The Trust reported that a number of task and finish groups were taking each of the work streams associated with the project forward.

5. It was resolved that a further update be provided to the Committee at its September meeting once the inpatient beds had been closed.

C. National Specialist Commissioning Board/NHS England: Children's Congenital Heart Surgery update

1. Following previous updates to the Committee, it was reported to the Committee in July that the Independent Reconfiguration Panel, who had been tasked with reviewing the children's congenital heart surgery service reconfiguration, had concluded that the proposals fell short of achieving safe, sustainable and accessible services for children. The Secretary of State, as a result of the Panel's report, suspended the children's congenital heart surgery review. This decision has made it unclear as to whether Southampton will continue to become a designated children's surgical heart centre, as agreed in the recommendations of the original review.

2. The Committee agreed to be kept informed of developments in relation to the future provision of services for children with congenital heart disease, and would contribute to any future review of children's congenital heart surgery as proposed by NHS England, the new commissioners of this service.

D. NHS England (Wessex): Vascular Surgical Services

1. The Committee reviewed a letter received from the Area Director of NHS England (Wessex), which provided stakeholders with an update on the progress of a network model for vascular surgical services locally.

2. Since the last update in April 2013, it was noted that joint working towards compliance with minimum standards was continuing in preparation for 1 October 2013, when these standards would come into effect. NHS England continued to agree that a vascular services network model between the two providers on the South Coast (Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust and University Hospital Southampton NHS

Foundation Trust) would be the most suitable way of meeting the needs of patients and achieving the best outcomes for them.

3. The Committee agreed that as the update letter being considered did not provide detailed proposals, it was not an appropriate time for the Committee to review the item or to reach a decision on the nature of the change.

4. Members agreed to engage with health scrutiny colleagues across Southampton, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth in order to explore the feasibility of a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee review which would examine any proposals for the future of vascular services from NHS England (Wessex).

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 5093)
- Proposals to vary or develop NHS services (search item reference 5092)

COUNCILLOR PAT WEST
Chairman

