

## **HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **TASK AND FINISH WORKING GROUP ON ADULT MENTAL HEALTH – SECTION 136**

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

##### **1. Role and Purpose of the Task and Finish Working Group**

The Task and Finish Working Group is a working group of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), and is appointed in accordance with the Constitution of Hampshire County Council.

The Task and Finish Group's purpose is to review progress being made to implement improvements to the Section 136 process in Hampshire.

##### **2. Scope of the Task and Finish Group**

The HOSC have previously reviewed substantial changes to Adult Mental Health services in Hampshire led by Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, which proposed to extend community based alternatives to hospital based care (where appropriate) for adults with Mental Health needs, enabling a reduction in the number of inpatient Adult Mental Health beds across the County.

As part of this work, Members received evidence relating to out of hours mental health assessments and the use of Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983. This evidence was reviewed by the HOSC at their 24 July 2012 meeting, where details were heard of plans to improve processes. Following this information, Members resolved to add the topic of Mental Health Act Section 136 assessments to the work programme for future scrutiny.

In addition, recent national publications and media stories relating to the use of Section 136, and more specifically, the use of police custody suites for those detained under this part of the Act have made the scrutiny of this topic timely.

The Committee have therefore agreed to form a working group to explore the following issues (subject to confirmation at the initial meeting of the Group):

- (a)** To review the evidence so far received by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to Section 136 processes in Hampshire, specifically the use of places of safety.
- (b)** To review progress made against Section 136 improvement actions being led by the Hampshire multi-agency group, using the Royal College of Psychiatrists statement as a benchmark for acceptable standards.

### **3. Method**

The working group will consider the evidence received by the HOSC to date from the relevant NHS Bodies and other partners. Where the working group requires further information in order to pursue the concerns outlined in the scope, such information will be requested.

### **4. Membership**

The working group shall be a cross party group made up of five Members of the HOSC.

### **5. Meetings**

The Working Group shall hold two initial meetings in September and October 2013 in order to consider historical evidence received by the HOSC in relation to Section 136, and to understand recent progress made by the multi-agency group (Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire County Council and Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, with oversight from Clinical Commissioning Group Commissioners) to implement improvements to the Section 136 process. After these meetings, it shall meet as often as required to satisfactorily explore concerns raised.

### **6. Code of Conduct**

Elected Members of the Working Group shall comply with the Hampshire County Council Code of Conduct applicable to Members.

### **7. Reporting**

The Working Group will make a final report to the HOSC once Members are satisfied that the issues in section 2 have been fully explored. Any recommendation made by the Working Group will be sent to the relevant organisations and provided to the HOSC for agreement.

The Working Group will cease to exist once its purpose has been fulfilled.