

JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER)

MONDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor L Mulherin in the Chair

Councillors S Ali, D Brown, J Clark,
M Gibbons, T Revill, B Rhodes, L Smaje,
K Wilson

Apologies Councillors J Bromby, R Goldthorpe,
B Hall, I Saunders,
S Wiseman and J Worton

17 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents in accordance with Procedure Rule 25 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

18 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

19 Late Items

There were no late items, however two additional documents were circulated in relation to agenda item 7 (Minute 23 refers), as they were not available at the time of the agenda dispatch. The documents comprised of two letters, one of which was from Sir Neil MacKay, responding to the questions which had been posed to the JCPCT by the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The other letter was from Jeremy Glyde, Programme Director at Safe and Sustainable, responding to the Committee's supplementary questions on behalf of Sir Neil MacKay.

20 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Rhodes declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 (Minute 23 refers), in her capacity as a member of UNISON.

21 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

The Chair reported that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Bromby, Goldthorpe, Hall, Saunders, Wiseman and Worton.

22 Minutes of Last Meeting

As the minutes of the last meeting were not yet available, this item was deferred to the next meeting of the Committee, which would be held on Thursday 22nd September 2011.

23 Proposed Reconfiguration of Children's Congenital Heart Services in England: Questions to the Joint Committee of Primary Care Trusts (JCPCT)

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report introducing the questions posed to the JCPCT by the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC), and seeking agreement of any specific matters for inclusion in the Committee's report to be presented to the JCPCT later in the year.

Members were informed that a representative of the JCPCT had agreed to attend a meeting of the JHOSC, which would be held on Thursday 22nd September 2011. Members who would not be available to attend that meeting were asked to submit any questions they wished to be put to the JCPCT's representative.

It was agreed that the following questions should be put to the JCPCT:

- The response from Sir Neil MacKay stated that Leeds has a relatively low caseload, however the Kennedy report stated that Leeds has long waiting lists. Can you explain this inconsistency?;
- Why was a review of adult congenital heart surgery not undertaken in conjunction with the children's review? This would have made sense given the increasing number of adult procedures, and the fact that the same surgeons operate on both children and adults. It is not acceptable that decisions will have already been made regarding paediatric provision, before the review of adult provision is undertaken;
- The response from Jeremy Glyde states that consultation will be undertaken in relation to adult services only if significant changes are recommended. What is meant by 'significant'?;
- The response from Sir Neil MacKay states that there are gaps in compliance in the Yorkshire and Humber cardiac network. Can you provide details on where those gaps are?;
- It is unacceptable to refuse to provide the breakdown of assessment scores to the JHOSC because the JCPCT does not want to see them. Under what authority is this information being withheld? Has the JCPCT been authorised to carry out confidential work?;
- If the Leeds centre was closed, the population of North East Lincolnshire (160,000) would be the most disadvantaged in terms of urban areas. What provisions are in place to deal with this?; and
- What financial assistance would be provided to families who were subject to increased travelling costs as a result of the review?

Members also discussed any issues that should be raised in the Committee's final report to the JCPCT. It was agreed that the following points should be covered:

- The formula used to determine the required number of centres is too simple and does not take account of all the relevant factors;
- The lack of reference to the support that will be required by families who will have to travel further as a result of the review;
- Concerns that if the Leeds centre was closed, ambulance costs for the Yorkshire and Humber region would increase dramatically;
- The results of the review of adult provision should be known before any changes are made as a result of the review of paediatric provision;
- Concerns that the impact of adverse travelling conditions (adverse weather, etc.) has not been taken into account;
- Concerns that under options A, B and C, somewhere in Yorkshire and Humber would be disadvantaged;
- A proposal should be put forward to keep eight centres open, including Leeds, Newcastle and Southampton. Members agreed that it would be favourable to keep both Leeds and Newcastle open rather than one or the other, and that Southampton should be kept open as people living on the Isle of Wight would be disadvantaged if it was closed. It was therefore agreed that the proposed option D should be supported, with the addition of the Newcastle and Southampton centres;
- Detail regarding areas of deprivation in Yorkshire and Humber, and the links with health inequalities should be included in the report. It was confirmed that information had been requested from Government Office Yorkshire and Humber regarding this issue; and
- The outcome of local consultations and petitions should be included in the report.

Members were informed that a first draft of the Committee's report would be circulated by Thursday 22nd September at the latest. There would then be the opportunity to agree a final version at the Committee's meeting on Thursday 29th September.

It was also agreed that the Secretary of State should be written to again, requesting a response prior to 29th September. It was also agreed that the Committee's concerns regarding the consultation process should be raised, including the reluctance of the JCPCT to meet with the Committee, and the refusal to release the breakdown of assessment scores, especially because it was not made clear that this information would not be made available at the start of the consultation process.

It was reported that a response had been received from two of the region's MPs, and that they would be provided to Members (along with any other responses received in the meantime) with the agenda for the meeting to be held on Thursday 22nd September 2011.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the questions listed above be put to the representative of the JCPCT at the Committee's meeting on Thursday 22nd September 2011;
- (b) That the issues listed above be raised in the Committee's report to the JCPCT; and

- (c) That a second letter be sent to the Secretary of State, requesting a response by 22nd September and raising the Committee's concerns in relation to the consultation process.

24 Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was reported that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Thursday 22nd September 2011 at 10.30am at Civic Hall, Leeds, with a pre-meeting from 10.00am.