



Democratic Services

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2 December 2011

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Foundation Trust Consultation
Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust
Trust Headquarters
Springhill 2, Brindley Way
Wakefield 41 Business Park
Wakefield
WF2 0XQ

Dear Sirs,

Re: Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust – Foundation Trust Proposals

At its meeting on 25 November 2011, Leeds City Council's Scrutiny Board (Health and Wellbeing and Adult Social Care) considered the Trust's proposals to become an NHS Foundation Trust during 2012.

Representatives from the Trust attended the meeting to present the proposals and address any questions raised by the Scrutiny Board. However, there were a number of questions that the representatives were unable to adequately address during the meeting.

Nonetheless, in order to meet the 4 December 2011 deadline, the Scrutiny Board agreed to highlight a number of areas of concern as an interim consultation response – pending consideration of any additional information. These areas of concern are detailed below:

Defined constituencies and the associated level of representatives on the Council of Governors

There is concern over the proposals to only include two local authority representatives for the whole of Yorkshire – which covers 13 top-tier authorities. Yorkshire is a diverse region, in terms of geography, general demographics and communities. While there is an appreciation of balancing the needs for having both a representative and functional governing body, there is concern whether the proposed structure of the governing body would sufficiently represent the diverse nature of the Yorkshire region and population.

Level and number of local authority representation on the Council of Governors

There is further concern over the proposals to only include two local authority representatives for the whole of Yorkshire – which covers 13 top-tier authorities. As set out above, the diverse nature of the Yorkshire region in terms of geography and general demographics would make it an almost impossible task for two local councillors to be able to represent the local authority community and the populations it serves. Furthermore, there is no clarity on how those local authority representatives would be identified and agreed.

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Election process for appointing public governors

The process for electing public governors is unclear. This includes details of how potential governors will be identified and nominated to stand for election and information around eligible 'voters'. Members also raised concern in relation to general public awareness of such elections and ensuring public governors are representative of the diverse population across the region. The term of office for governors was also unclear.

Organisational preparedness for Foundation Trust status

There were some queries regarding the preparedness of the Trust in becoming an independent, stand-alone NHS Foundation Trust, with some discussion around current service standards, quality, and the associated assurance processes.

Reference was made to previous (press) coverage of performance issues and whether there was sufficient focus on organisational performance. It was unclear whether any current performance issues needed to be addressed, rather than pursuing Foundation Trust status.

It was also unclear how cross-boarder activity and/or co-operation with other Ambulance Trusts operated and what (if any) the impact of becoming a Foundation Trust would have on any such arrangements.

Financial arrangements associated with Foundation Trust status

Arrangements for allocating funding/ budgets to address the range of differing needs across the region was raised as an area for consideration. There was also some questioning around the potential impact of any budget deficit on the delivery of services and how this would be managed / addressed under Foundation Trust arrangements.

It should be noted that a written response addressing the outstanding issues raised at the Scrutiny Board meeting has now been received. This written response will help inform further consideration of the Trust's proposals at the next Scrutiny Board meeting, due to be held on 21 December 2011. As part of this further consideration, the Chief Executive of the Trust is planning to attend this meeting and a supplementary consultation response may then be issued.

I trust this is helpful, however should you have any queries and/or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Steven Courtney
Principal Scrutiny Adviser
Democratic Services

cc All members of the Scrutiny Board (Health and Well-being and Adult Social Care)
Mr David Whiting, Chief Executive, Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust