

**SCRUTINY PROGRESS REPORT**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To update the position in respect of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) and scrutiny panels. The current position regarding progress made by the Board and each of the panels is set out below.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

2. Since the beginning of the municipal year, the Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 14 June to consider the following:
  - a) 2nd Capital Monitoring Review 2015/16
  - b) Final Report of the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel – Use of Consultants
  - c) Executive Forward Work Programme

**SCRUTINY PANEL UPDATES**

3. The panels will be holding the first meetings of the municipal year in July to establish their work programme for 2015/16.

**South Tees Health Scrutiny Joint Committee**

4. The Committee met on 10 June to receive the results of the South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) public consultation regarding their review of Urgent Care – Making Health Simple. The Committee had the following conclusions

**i - Location/Accessibility**

- Members were very concerned about the unintended consequences of the proposals and the effect that the closure of the walk-in centres may have in adding to the current pressures on numbers attending A&E at James Cook University Hospital. The Committee sought assurances that clearly planned and alternative provision must be put in place to deal with the demand before the walk in centres were closed.
- There was some support from Members for a GP in A&E, others thought it would be confusing, and the Committee agreed that there needed to be a clear message given to the public that A&E isn't for minor complaints.
- Members did have serious concerns about the public's access to venues and in particular the accessibility of the GP centres in terms of their location, the availability of

parking and the provision of public transport, especially out of hours and from the more rural locations.

- Members agreed that the location of the hubs was vital and that the location of the services should be equitable across the South Tees area. Members were especially interested in the detailed activity modelling that have been undertaken to predict where patients were most likely to migrate to.

## **ii - Resources - Personnel**

- Members had concerns over the GP workforce, in an area where there are known GP shortages, where it was difficult to attract GPs and where older GPs were due to retire. Members were concerned that there would be a burden on GPs to cover more hours.
- Anecdotal evidence given at the panel outlined how some people still face difficulties getting to see their own GP.

## **iii - Resources – Finance**

- At the time the review commenced, pre the General Practice Forward View announcement, the Committee were concerned that there was no additional funding to accompany the proposals and that there was a danger that some GP practices were currently running at full capacity and would not be able to 'soak up' any further work.
  - With regards to the improvements to the 111 service Members had concerns about the freedom GP practices had to run their own appointment systems and if GP practices would be required to take part in the proposed booking system.
  - Members were also keen to see fully collaborative working between commissioners to ensure an integrated urgent care system, notably pharmacy, dental care and primary care. The Committee also recognised the importance of joint working with Public Health to promote prevention and self-care.
5. As a result of all the information received by the committee, Members supported the general direction of travel, recognising that both nationally and locally the pressures on the health and social care systems mean that no change is not an option. The changes were part of the wider political will and initiatives that are being implemented nationally, such as the 7 day working and extended opening hours. Whilst supporting the proposals the Committee agreed that there was still some work to do to achieve the primary aim, which is to 'make it simple' for the public. The Committee therefore agreed that they will not be referring the matter to the Secretary of State but that a number of recommendations should be made.
6. The Committee obviously want to see improvements which will result in better outcomes and reduced health inequalities for people who use the service and will therefore be asking the CCG to keep in regular contact through the implementation of the proposals and beyond and as such, the Committee put forward a number of recommendations for the CCG which were as follows:
- a) That the CCG return to the Committee to inform Members on a number of issues, including:
    - How the proposals will be implemented

- What the services will look like
  - Where the locations of the extended hours GP practices will be (and how those locations were determined)
  - Further details on the Travel Plan
  - The implications and implementation of the General Practice Forward View.
- b) In addition to a) above, that, post implementation, the CCG return to the Committee on an annual basis to provide information and analysis to enable the Committee to monitor the effects of the proposals and specifically the siting of a GP in front of house in A&E.
- c) That clearly planned and alternative provision must be put in place to deal with the demand across the South Tees before the walk-in centres are closed.
- d) That when the changes to the urgent care system are put in place that this is well publicised and clear communication is given to the public so they understand what service are available and when and how they access them.
- e) As a result of work that Middlesbrough's Health Scrutiny Panel had been involved in on cancer screening, the Committee would like to recommend that the availability of screening services should be included in the services provided by the extended hours GP hubs.
7. The CCG will be meeting on 6 July to finalise the proposals, however they have indicated that they will continue the constructive working relationship they have with the Committee and reassure Members on the issues outlined in the Committee's response, including exploring opportunities for screening services to be available in the extended hours GP centres.

## **SCRUTINY REPORTS SUBMITTED TO EXECUTIVE**

8. Since the last update to Council, the following scrutiny panel reports have been submitted to, and approved by, The Executive:
- Children and Learning – Safeguarding and Children in Care
  - Environment – Bereavement Services

**COUNCILLOR JEAN SHARROCKS**

**CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

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