

**HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL**

**9 MARCH 2011**

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE REFORMS –  
A DISCUSSION ON PROGRESS**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To introduce representation from Middlesbrough Council, NHS Middlesbrough and General Practice, in attendance to discuss progress in responding to the coming significant reforms for the health and social care economy.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. That the Panel notes the update received.
3. That following consideration of the update received today, the Panel considers whether it would like to investigate progress further, or if it is sufficiently assured on current progress to request a further update in three months.

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORT**

4. The Panel is well aware that The Department of Health document *Equity & Excellence – Liberating the NHS*, was released in July 2010 and proposed significant developments for the structure and operation of local Health & Social Care systems. The Health Scrutiny Panel constructed and submitted a formal response to that consultation process, following consideration of a number of points of view.
5. Given the magnitude of the proposals, and the implications they have for the operation of the local NHS and Local Government, The Health Scrutiny Panel decided that it should maintain a watching brief on the topic. As such, the Panel decided to dedicate meeting time, every three months or so, to hear of the progress made in responding to the proposed reforms.
6. The Panel held its first meeting of this sort on 15 December 2010, where it heard initial thoughts from representatives of the local NHS, General Practice and Middlesbrough Council on steps necessary to respond to the reforms set

out. A record of that discussion is attached as Appendix 1, for the benefit of the Health Scrutiny Panel.

7. Since the meeting on December 15<sup>th</sup>, the Health & Social Care Bill has been published and is currently going through the necessary parliamentary processes, as it moves towards becoming law. Whilst the consultation process altered some aspects of proposals, major components such as GP Commissioning Consortia, Local Health & Wellbeing Boards and the abolition of Primary Care Trusts remain central to the reforms.
8. Against that backdrop, the meeting today has been arranged to explore the progress made, and the challenges faced, in responding to the significant reforms set by the Government. To that end, the Panel meeting will be attended by senior representation from Middlesbrough Council, NHS Middlesbrough & General Practice.
9. Those attending have not been asked to prepare any papers, although they have been asked, on behalf of the Panel, to consider the following questions and be prepared to outline their views on the questions.
  - What progress has been made with the establishment of a GP Commissioning Consortia?
  - What progress has been made with the development of a health and wellbeing board?
  - Has any thought been given to how those two functions will relate to each other?
  - How is the local authority preparing for the assumption of public health responsibilities?
  - How is the PCT performing its 'transition role' in having to deal with the 'here and now', yet also having to play a crucial role in the capacity building of Consortia?
10. The questions outlined above are by no means an exhaustive list and have been prepared as a guide for the Panel and those attending today. It is anticipated that those attending will provide their initial views, ahead of addressing questions from the Panel. The Panel is asked to explore any areas of enquiry it has about progress and challenges associated with the reforms.
11. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Panel is asked to consider whether it would like to investigate the topic further, or whether it is sufficiently assured of progress. If the Panel is satisfied with the progress made, it is suggested that the Panel revisits the topic in another three months, to continue to chart developments and make necessary enquiries.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12. Please see Appendix 1 - Minutes of the Health Scrutiny Panel on 15 December 2010.

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