

**REPORT FROM THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

*The Committee met on 12 December 2017*

**1. ANNUAL SCRUTINY OF HEALTH PROVIDERS FINANCES 2018/2019**

1.1 Members held a full day scrutiny meeting to challenge health providers from six key organisations used by Hertfordshire residents. The finances of the following Hertfordshire health providers were scrutinised:

- Hertfordshire Partnership University Foundation NHS Trust (HPFT)
- West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust (WHHT)
- Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust (PAH)
- Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust (HCT)
- East & North Herts NHS Trust (ENHT)
- East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST)

1.2 Members considered a number of overarching and individual challenges facing the organisations, the details of which can be found in the report from the Head of Scrutiny (item 5 Finance Scrutiny Report) here:  
<http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/686/Committee/12/Default.aspx>

1.3 Members noted that the Committee's scrutiny of health providers Quality Accounts would be held on 15 and 29 March 2018.

**2. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

2.1 The work programme was noted and agreed by the Committee.

2.2 The scope for the Children and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Topic Group scheduled to be held on 12 January 2018 was noted and agreed by Members.

2.3 Members were informed that the first meeting of the Impact of Scrutiny Sub-Committee had been held on 28 November 2017. No Health Scrutiny Committee items were considered at this meeting.

2.4 Members also received a verbal update from Simon Banks, Assistant Chief Legal Officer, on the current position regarding Nascot Lawn Respite Centre and the ongoing legal proceedings.

### **3. HERTFORDSHIRE HEALTH CONCORDAT UPDATE**

- 3.1 Members were presented with the updated Health Concordat, the purpose of which was to govern the way in which health organisations interact.
- 3.2 It was noted that, to date, not all partners had signed the Concordat and that work would be ongoing to encourage the remaining partners to sign up to the agreement.
- 3.3 The Committee was advised that, in addition to the Concordat, the Head of Scrutiny and Scrutiny Officer met regularly and communicated with senior officers from across the health providers, and the Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee met regularly with Chief Executives of the health providers to promote and strengthen relationships.

*The Committee met on 18 January 2018*

### **4. UPDATE ON OUTCOMES OF WEST HERTFORDSHIRE HOSPITALS (WHHT) CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) INSPECTION**

- 4.1 Members received a presentation from the Chief Medical Director and the Director of Nursing from the West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust (WHHT) on the outcomes of its recent CQC inspection. The presentation can be found as Presentation 1 here:  
<http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/686/Committee/12/Default.aspx>
- 4.2 Prior to Member discussion on the presentation, at the invitation of the Chairman, officers from WHHT provided a brief update to the Committee on the winter pressures that the Trust was experiencing, and what strategies it had implemented to manage them.
- 4.3 Members heard that the Trust had experienced, and was continuing to experience, a significant increase in workload over the winter months due to a higher number of patients presenting at the Emergency Department.
- 4.4 The Committee was advised that the Trust had adhered to all the strategic directives from NHS England, which included removing scheduled elective surgery appointments from Watford General Hospital; these operations had continued at St Albans City Hospital.
- 4.5 In addition, the Trust had implemented a number of strategies to effectively and efficiently manage the increased number of patients at the hospital including:
  - Doubling the number of ward rounds by consultants;
  - Having a number of specialist consultants, including cardiologists and paediatricians being temporarily based at the Emergency Department (ED) to reduce waiting times for patients in the ED;

- Expansion of the Clinical Decision Unit (CDU) at Watford General Hospital
- Increase in number and length of shifts for staff.

4.6 With respect to the CQC inspection, Members were pleased to note that WHHT had been removed from special measures and had been graded as 'requires improvement' overall, with a number of 'good' gradings within individual areas of the Trust. Members discussed the details of the inspection and noted that these improvements had received personal recognition from the Secretary of State.

## **5. HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD UPDATE**

5.1 Members were provided with an overview on the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

5.2 The Committee discussed and acknowledged the impact that the creation of the Strategic Transformation Partnership was having on health providers and the Health & Wellbeing Board.

5.3 Members agreed that a scrutiny be undertaken on the Health & Wellbeing Board in due course.

## **6. EAST AND NORTH HERTS NHS TRUST: S WINTER PRESSURES**

6.1 Members heard details of the continuing high volume of patients presenting at the Emergency Department at Lister Hospital over the winter months.

6.2 The Committee was advised that on an average day 300 patients attend the Emergency Department (ED); however, over the Christmas period, the average number of patients seen daily was 400, with this peaking at 482 on 2 January 2018.

6.3 Officers added further detail that on average 90 patients per day would be admitted to the hospital from the ED. This rose to an average of 110 per day over the Christmas period, peaking at 155.

6.4 Members acknowledged that this spike in patients had impacted on the target rate of attending to patients within 4 hours; however, assurance was received that no patients had been subjected to waiting in ambulances, and 46 extra beds had been opened to mitigate pressures resulting from the increased demand.

6.5 During discussion, it was established that a large number of the patients that were attending had been frail elderly people, some with respiratory conditions. It was confirmed that, to date, only a small number of patients had attended presenting with 'flu.

## **7. QUALITY ACCOUNTS SEMINAR**

- 7.1 Members were provided with a presentation from officers from the Hertfordshire Community Trust (HCT) explaining the purpose of Quality Accounts. This is to inform the Quality Accounts scrutiny taking place in March. The presentation and the supplementary document circulated can be found as Presentations 2 and 2a here:

<http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/686/Committee/12/Default.aspx>

## **8. OUTCOMES OF THE SCRUTINY OF HEALTH PROVIDER FINANCES HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2017**

- 8.1 Members were provided with the report detailing the outcomes of the scrutiny of Health Provider Finances held on 12 December 2017.
- 8.2 In response to a Member question, it was noted that the recommendations detailed in the report reflected the outcomes identified on the day. It was acknowledged that the overarching issue that had been stated by health providers was that finances remain a challenge for all providers.
- 8.3 It was acknowledged that the Committee had agreed a further scrutiny on the finances of Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group and East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group, and that this would be added to the added to the work programme.

## **9. INTRODUCTION OF A NEW ONLINE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

- 9.1 Members were introduced to the new online scrutiny work programme, which would enable Members and the public to view the past and future planned work of both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health Scrutiny Committee.

## **10. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

- 10.1 Members agreed the following changes to the work programme:
- Addition of a scrutiny of Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group and East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning finances at a date to be confirmed;
  - Addition of a scrutiny of Health and Wellbeing Board at a date to be confirmed;
  - Removal of the scrutiny of West Hertfordshire Hospitals Trust from the work programme;
  - Addition of the Strategic Transformation Partnership as a seminar at a date to be confirmed;
  - Change to Member Bulletin regarding the Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service from Health Scrutiny Committee to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **11. OTHER HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTIVITY**

- 11.1 On the 6 November 2017, Members of the Committee visited Stevenage Ambulance Station. This was considered a very informative and useful visit.
- 11.2 On the 27 November 2017, Members of both the Health Scrutiny Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee visited the Fire and Rescue Centre. This reflected the cross working of departments within the Council.
- 11.3 On the 5 February 2018, Members of the Committee will visit the new Ambulance Station in Hemel Hempstead. This visit has not taken place at the time of writing this report; a verbal update will be provided at the meeting if required.

**Seamus Quilty**  
**Chairman**  
**February 2018**