

Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 19 December 2016



Subject: Scrutiny of External Organisations – Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Committee consider and agree appropriate lines of questioning and presentation, for external organisations due to attend future meetings for the purposes of the external scrutiny of local services.

1. (Director of Governance) The Committee has previously requested that Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust be invited to attend a future meeting, to respond to the concerns of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in respect of aspects of local inpatient, outpatient and other medical and emergency services. The Trust has confirmed that its Chairman and Chief Executive will attend an extraordinary meeting of the Committee to be held on 30 January 2017.
2. In accordance with the procedures for such external scrutiny agreed in October 2016, the Committee is therefore now asked to consider and agree appropriate lines of questioning for the Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust. No overarching themes or specific issues of local hospital services have yet been identified by the Committee as the emphasis for such external scrutiny, although the recent report of the CQC (19 October 2016) on its 'inadequate' judgement of the quality of care at Princess Alexandra Hospital, is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
3. The Committee is requested to consider and agree any appropriate lines of questioning to be raised with the Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, in order that prior notice of the scope of questions likely to be raised by members can be provided to the Trust to ensure that maximum value is derived from this external scrutiny activity.
4. Members are also asked to give direction on the preferred approach of the Committee to the format of such external scrutiny, particularly in terms of the scope of any formal presentation that may be required from the Trust. The Committee should ensure that it identifies clear objectives for any such presentation.
5. There may be public interest in the Council's scrutiny of local hospital services and infrastructure and the Committee may therefore wish to identify appropriate proactive publicity to raise awareness of the concerns of members, so as to make the process as meaningful and useful as possible.
6. It should be noted that the review and scrutiny of matters relating to the planning, provision and operation of health services across Essex is generally a function reserved to Essex County Council, through its Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, the County Council has not normally been averse to Epping

Forest District Council undertaking appropriate health scrutiny where local concerns exist. As a matter of courtesy therefore, the Essex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been advised of the intentions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in regard to this external scrutiny of the Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust.

7. It is understood that a joint scrutiny approach to the concerns of the CQC in respect of Princess Alexandra Hospital, is being planned between the Essex and Hertfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees for early 2017. Essex County Council has indicated that an invitation will be extended to the relevant district council's for member participation in such scrutiny process.

Resource Implications:

The recommendations of this report seek to enable scrutiny activity to meet the work programme requirements of the Committee effectively.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council's constitution sets out rules for the management of its overview and scrutiny responsibilities. Although external organisations are not generally required by legislation to attend before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it is hoped that most would be willing to engage constructively with the Council's scrutiny activity when invited to do so.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district.

Consultation Undertaken:

This report seeks the identification of the overarching themes and specific issues to be subject of external scrutiny activity by the Committee. No further consultation is considered necessary.

Background Papers:

None

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The Council's constitution sets out rules for the management of its overview and scrutiny responsibilities.

Equality:

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.