

REVIEW INTO URGENT HEALTH CARE IN WYCOMBE DISTRICT

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What is the Commission being asked to do?*

To agree the scope and approach to the Commission's review into urgent health care as set out in the report, which includes a public listening event on 15 October, 2014, with a report back to the Commission's meeting on 12 November 2014.

Executive Summary

Full Council, at its meeting on 28 July 2014, unanimously passed a motion that the Improvement and review Commission undertake a review into urgent health care in Wycombe District.

This report outlines the terms of reference for the review, which proposes a primary focus on how well the current arrangements work as seen through the eyes of the public, as well as the providers of the service. The aim is to produce some practical recommendations to the relevant agencies to ensure residents get the best health care treatment as quickly as possible.

A public listening event has been arranged for Wednesday 15 October 2014, with a view to bringing a report to the Commission's meeting on 12 November, for recommendation to Council on 15 December 2014. It is proposed that the relevant service providers be invited to the Commission's meeting on 12 November, after the public listening event, prior to the the Commission finalising its report and recommendations.

Background and Issues

Referral of Motion from Council

At their meeting on 28 July 2014, Full Council unanimously agreed, following a motion submitted by Councillor Tony Green, and seconded by Councillor Jean Teesdale, as follows:

"This Council welcomes the recent report by the Buckinghamshire Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee into urgent care provision in Buckinghamshire but believe that additional work is required to fully understand the effect the changes at Wycombe Hospital have had on the residents of Wycombe District.

This Council therefore requests the Improvement and Review Commission to undertake further work on Urgent Care provision in Wycombe that includes:

- A public listening event in Wycombe District to hear from the general public, stakeholders and users of the A&E and Minor Injuries and Illness Unit.
- More evidence on the Emergency Medical Centre at High Wycombe, Transportation between Wycombe district and Stoke Mandeville, and the situation of the frail elderly and hard to reach groups".

Background

Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee

In Buckinghamshire, health scrutiny is normally conducted as a joint activity with the County Council. The Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee has replaced the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which has an expanded remit that includes Adult Social Care, in addition to local health services and public health. Membership of this Committee comprises of eleven County Councillors, a Councillor from each of the four local District Councils, and a representative of Health Watch Bucks. Councillor Tony Green is this Council's representative.

Attached at **Appendix "A"** is the report of the Buckinghamshire County Council's Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee on Urgent Care in Buckinghamshire, which was published in April 2014.

This report made four recommendations, which can be found on page 3 of the report. Recommendation (1) was for the "report, and particularly paragraphs 7-21 is circulated to all local MP's, County and District Councillors, so they can understand why the local Health Scrutiny Committee considers the local A&E provision in place to be in the best interests of all residents, based on it supporting better clinical outcomes and aligning with national recommended practice."

The Select Committee was asked to undertake the two activities that were included in the motion to Council, but the majority of the inquiry group was satisfied that sufficient evidence had been gathered to deliver its scope and that the final report came to the correct conclusions and recommendations. (See paragraph 6 on page 5 of the report).

Stakeholders

The following stakeholders have been contacted for assistance with this review:

- Aylesbury Vale Clinical Commissioning Group
- Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Group
- Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust
- Healthwatch Bucks
- South Central Ambulance Service
- Bucks Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee
- Dr Jane O'Grady, Director of Public Health
- Bucks Health and Wellbeing Board
- Mr Steve Baker, MP

In addition, Councillors Tony Green and Jean Teesdale (the Council's representatives on the Bucks Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee) and Councillor Julia Adey, District Council Cabinet Member for Community (which includes health matters) have been kept informed of this review.

In terms of specific support and co-operation, each stakeholder has been contacted and a summary of the responses is listed below:

Attendance at the public listening event on 15 October, 2014

The Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust and the Aylesbury and Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Groups will be represented at the public listening event. Steve Baker MP will also be attending.

The Bucks Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC) welcome the review and value the importance of working in partnership with district councils through their Committee. The role of their Committee has for many years co-opted representatives from each district council with full voting rights to ensure that the Committee is able to fulfil its statutory remit in scrutinising the provision of health services and outcomes for residents across the county. Therefore the HASC does not consider it would be appropriate for the HASC to be formally represented at the event, either via the attendance of committee members or BCC scrutiny officers who support it. However the committee members are at liberty to attend the event as members of the public if they so wish. The conclusions they came to in their urgent care report were based on the evidence available to them. The NHS is responsible for explaining the evidence behind their commissioning decisions. The report on urgent care we published explains why we have come to the view that the current design of urgent care provision is in the best interests of all local residents. If anyone disputes this, they should communicate this to the NHS organisations that commission and provide the services.

The South Central Ambulance Service is happy to co-operate in any way they can but cannot support this in the way requested as it feels the services provided to the community by Wycombe Hospital have shown exceptional results in both Stroke and Cardiac Care. Without doubt, the closure of High Wycombe has increased the journey times, as now the patients requiring emergency treatment are taken to either Stoke Mandeville and Wexham Hospital which will include frail and elderly in particular to falls. Patients that are FAST test+ or patients with active chest pain showing changes on an ECG will automatically be taken to High Wycombe, again at times lengthening the journey time. They state that patients are receiving a superb service in regards to Cardiac and Stroke including the extended drive time to get there.

Replies are currently awaited from Healthwatch Bucks and the Health and Wellbeing Board and a verbal update will be given at the meeting.

Request to make any specific representations to the Commission on the two review areas or share any information which would help the Commission with its review?

The Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust and the Aylesbury and Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Groups would welcome the opportunity to provide information on urgent care services in Buckinghamshire as background information to the review process as well as a perspective of the national development of NHS urgent and emergency care services. These bodies have asked the Council to outline what additional information would assist with the review in addition to that already available.

Steve Baker MP has indicated he will submit his written observations on the two review areas, which will be reported to the 12 November meeting. It is also

suggested that representatives of the Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust and the Aylesbury and Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Groups be invited to attend the 12 November meeting to answer any questions prior to finalising the report and recommendations.

The Bucks Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee have referenced their recent report (covered earlier) and this is attached as an appendix as background to this review. The Chairman of the Committee, in her response, highlights that their inquiry was extensive in its research and was formally agreed by the HASC. The inquiry was undertaken in response to public concerns over urgent care provision, particularly in the Wycombe area. The nature of these concerns were acknowledged in the report, based on information received by the Committee and the content of the petition submitted on the topic to the committee in July 2013. Based on awareness of the concerns, and the other evidence referenced in the report the HASC came to its conclusions. A response to the report from the local NHS commissioners is awaited, and when received will be shared to assist with this review.

Whilst a reply is awaited from Healthwatch Bucks, we are aware that they are currently undertaking an urgent care survey of users in Buckinghamshire. A request has been made to Healthwatch Bucks as to whether the results would be able to be made available to help the Commission with their review.

Scope of this Review

Based on the Council's motion and the replies received from stakeholders, the scope of this review is proposed as follows:

“To report and make recommendations to Council, for submission to relevant stakeholders, on ways to further improve the existing arrangements for urgent health care for residents in Wycombe District, having taken into account

(a) The views of the general public, stakeholders and users of the A&E and Minor Injuries and Illness Unit; and

(b) Consideration of available evidence relating to the Emergency Medical Centre at High Wycombe, transportation between Wycombe District and Stoke Mandeville, and the situation of the frail elderly and hard to reach groups.”

It is acknowledged that there is an on-going debate regarding the current configuration of the local acute healthcare services, which this review is not designed to address, although it acts as an important context to the debate.

Conducting the Review

It is proposed that, given the nature of this review, the conduct of this review should be undertaken by the Commission itself, rather than through a Task and Finish Group.

A public listening event has been arranged for Wednesday 15 October 2014 starting at 7.00pm at Bucks New University. The primary focus of this event is to hear from users and residents of Wycombe District on how well the current arrangements work as seen through the eyes of the public (not just the providers of the service), with the aim of producing some practical recommendations to the relevant agencies to ensure people get the best health care treatment they can as quickly as possible.

Advance publicity is being undertaken for the general public and users to attend, with all attendees being asked to register in advance.

A report will be then be brought back to the Commission's meeting on 12 November, 2014 covering:

- (a) Feedback from the public listening event;
- (b) Any available evidence relating to the Emergency Medical Centre at High Wycombe, transportation between Wycombe District and Stoke Mandeville, and the situation of the frail elderly and hard to reach groups.
- (c) Representations from the service providers.

The aim is for the Commission, at its meeting on 12 November, to finalise any recommendations for submission to Council on 15 December, 2014. If necessary a special meeting of the Commission can be considered to be held during November or December, ahead of the Council meeting.

Conclusions/ Recommendations

The Commission is asked to agree the scope and approach to this review into urgent health care in Wycombe District.

Next Steps*

The key dates for the review are:

- 15 October - Public listening event at 7.00pm – 9.00pm at BNU.
- 12 November - Report back to Commission with service providers invited to attend. (And/or a special meeting)
- 15 December - Council meeting

Background Papers

Letter to stakeholders from the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services dated 8 August 2014.