

# **Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**



**Date of meeting: 2 February 2006**

**SCRUTINY**

**Portfolio: Community Wellbeing**

**Subject: Commissioning A Patient led NHS - Formal Consultations**



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**Committee Secretary: Z Folley (4532)**

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## **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- (1) To receive and note the content of three formal consultation documents under this general theme as follows:**
  - (a) New Primary Care Trust Arrangements in Essex;**
  - (b) New Strategic Health Authority Arrangements in the East of England; and**
  - (c) Configuration of NHS Ambulance Trusts in England.**
- (2) To receive and note the Joint Statement on New Primary Care Trust Arrangements in Essex issued by the Boards and professional Executive Committees of the Epping Forest and Harlow PCT's.**
- (3) To receive a presentation on the Consultation from Terry Hanafin, the Chief Executive of the Essex Strategic Health Authority.**
- (4) To determine whether the Council should respond to any of the consultation documents and if so what that response should be.**

## **Report:**

1. The Council is invited to comment on proposed changes to the boundaries of NHS Organisations in Essex. There are three proposed reconfigurations for consultation, these being:
  - New Primary Care Trust Arrangements in Essex;
  - New Strategic Health Authority Arrangements in the East of England; and
  - Configuration of NHS Ambulance Trusts in England.
2. Members of the Committee will receive separately the consultation documents issued for the three areas. Copies have been made available in the Members Room.
3. Terry Hanafin, the Chief Executive of the Essex Strategic Health Authority, will be at the Committee in order to give a brief presentation and to answer Members' questions. He will be accompanied by Wendy Smith, the Director of Communications for the Strategic Health Authority.
4. In addition to the Consultation documents, Members will find as an annex hereto a joint statement in response to the formal consultation issued by the Boards and Professional Executive Committees of the Epping Forest and Harlow Primary Care Trusts. This joint statement refers to consultation on new Primary Care Trust Arrangements in Essex only. This consultation sets out four options for changing from the current 13 Primary Care organisations as follows:

Option 1 - 2 PCT's - North Essex PCT and South Essex PCT.

Option 2 - 3 PCT's - Essex County PCT, Southend PCT and Thurrock PCT.

Option 3 – 4 PCT's - North Essex PCT, South Essex PCT, Southend PCT and Thurrock PCT;

Option 4 – 5 PCT's - Mid Essex PCT, North East Essex PCT, South East Essex PCT, South West Essex PCT and West Essex PCT.

5. The reasoning, benefits and dis-benefits of each of these options are set out in the Consultation document. The Council is invited to consider each of these Options and express a preference.
6. Each of the other two consultation documents do not offer a choice of options and put forward one suggestion only on which the Council is invited to comment.
7. The Committee has previously considered this matter at its meeting on 6 October 2005 in response to an informal consultation carried out by the Strategic Health Authority. On that occasion Aidan Thomas attended, gave a short presentation and answered Members' questions. The Committee resolved that its response to the informal consultation should be:

**“RESOLVED:**

That the Essex Strategic Health Authority be informed of the recommendations of the Committee set out below:

- That there be no changes to the existing structure of Primary Care Trusts.
  - That of the three identified options, option 3 is the least worst option as it will entail that PCTs will still be relatively close to local services and residents and reflect the catchment area of the District general hospitals which will support work already undertaken”.
8. Since then the Government's position has changed significantly in relation to PCT's becoming purely commissioning bodies and they could now continue to provide community health services also. This was an issue of concern at the time of the informal consultation since Epping Forest PCT is a major supplier of community health services within this district. There have also been some changes in relation to finances which had affected some of the original assumptions on overhead costs. This means that smaller PCT's are now more viable than they were at the time of the informal consultation.
  9. In approving the four options for formal consultation however, the Department of Health have made it clear that “do nothing” is not an option and so no change is not on the agenda.
  10. Members are asked to determine whether the Council should respond to the formal consultation in respect of each of the three issues and if so what that response should be.