

Report title: Joint Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) – Essex, Southend and Thurrock - Terms of Reference and supplementary guidance	
Report to: Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
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Date: 7 March 2024	For: Decision
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County Divisions affected: Not applicable	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out a framework for the working relationship between, and distinguishing roles of, the Essex, Southend and Thurrock Joint Health Scrutiny Committee which cover services within the local authority boundaries of Essex, Southend, and Thurrock. The report also sets out the proposed Terms of Reference for the joint committee.
- 1.2 Please note that the establishment of a Joint HOSC and its Terms of Reference is subject to agreement by each of the three respective local authorities.
- 1.3 In the event that one local authority decides not to endorse the proposal to form a Joint HOSC, the other two parties may wish to continue to work together under a joint arrangement, with the basis for this set out in the same Terms of Reference, minus the non-participating authority.
- 1.4 Local authorities may appoint a discretionary joint health scrutiny committee to carry out health scrutiny of issues which cross local authority boundaries (Regulation 30). Regulation 30 also requires local authorities to appoint a mandatory joint committee where an NHS body or health service provider consults more than one local authority's health scrutiny function about a proposal for a substantial variation or development in service.

2. Action required

- 2.1 The committee is asked to: -
 - a) comment upon the proposed working arrangements for the joint committee covering Essex, Southend and Thurrock, as set out in the report;
 - b) Endorse the Terms of Reference for the joint committee, attached at Appendix 1.

3. Background

- 3.1 Essex Health Overview, Policy and Scrutiny Committee, Southend People Scrutiny Committee and Thurrock Health Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a joint scrutiny committee, to scrutinise, on a discretionary basis, activities taking place under the banner of the ICS which are likely to impact upon patients from both counties. The joint committee will also act as the mandatory joint committee if an NHS body is required to consult health scrutiny on a substantial variation or development in service as part of the

- implementation of the ICS.
- 3.2 In December 2023, the Chairman of the Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee received a request from the Executive Director of Strategy and Corporate Services at Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board to support in working with Southend and Thurrock to make appropriate arrangements under section 30 (5) of the regulations for the relevant scrutiny functions to be exercised by a joint scrutiny panel.
- 3.3 This request was in relation the Mid and South Essex Integrated Care Board review of intermediate care and stroke rehabilitation inpatient services in community hospitals in MSE; freestanding midwife-led birthing services and ambulatory services provided at St Peter's Hospital in Maldon.
- 3.4 Discussions with HOSC Councillors at Thurrock and Southend have taken place as to how the three authorities can come together to scrutinise health matters which significantly affect all three local populations.
- 3.5 A meeting was held on 12 January 2024 with officer and Elected Member colleagues at Essex and Thurrock to discuss how ways of working may be strengthened by coming together to scrutinise health topics that cross local authority boundaries.
- 3.6 Subsequently a Joint Terms of Reference was developed to act as a blueprint for any future joint panel meeting. The JHOSC is, therefore, not just for the purposes of the public consultation relating to community hospitals in MSE; but to form a basis on which to undertake any future joint scrutiny as and when is appropriate and required and set out the working arrangements for this.
- 3.7 Thurrock and Southend are currently considering their responses to the consultation and the proposal to form a Joint HOSC through their own respective governance processes.
- 3.8 Whilst there is an ICS process covering Southend and Thurrock, the focus of any cross-boundary discussions will be via the joint committee. This arrangement does not preclude the individual committees from continuing to scrutinise aspects of the ICSs individually, where it makes sense to do so.
- 3.9 Those matters that are overwhelmingly the responsibility of one Local Authority area should be discussed and led by the respective health scrutiny committee. These matters may include (but are not exclusively): -
- a) the relocation or reconfiguration of primary care services accessed by patients from within the local authority boundary;
 - b) the relocation or reconfiguration of local community services accessed by patients living from within the local authority boundary;
 - c) any proposals for changes to the delivery of acute services which only impact upon patients residing within the local authority boundary.
- 3.10 The individual Committee's may also exercise an overview role across ICSs which cover their local authority area, for example, in scrutinising whether local communities within the local authority boundary have equality of access to health and care services.
- 3.11 Those matters that cut across the whole ICS footprint area in terms of location and/or patient pathways should be discussed and led by the joint committee. These matters may include (but are not exclusively):
- a) The overall sustainability of the ICS plans, including finance;

- b) Matters relating to digital integration of health services across local authority boundaries;
- c) Future proposals for acute reconfiguration and/or specialisation/networked services accessed by patients from Essex, Southend, and Thurrock;
- d) Overarching strategies relevant to the ICS footprint, although local implications may be reviewed by the “home” committee;
- e) Ongoing and new public and stakeholder consultation and engagement on the above matters.

3.12 These principles set out above are intended as guidance only, to supplement the joint committee’s Terms of Reference.

4. Reasons for Decisions

- 4.1 To establish a framework for a joint committee to scrutinise health matters and proposals which may impact upon services provided across the Essex, Southend and Thurrock footprint.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The proposal to form a JHOSC will be managed within existing resources.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Counterparts at Southend and Thurrock have been consulted alongside colleagues at Mid and South Essex ICB.

7. List of Appendices

App A: Essex, Southend, and Thurrock Joint Health Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference