

HOSC/14/17

Committee Health Overview and Scrutiny

Date 20 March 2017

Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust & Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust - briefing on the long-term strategic partnership

The November 2016 meeting of the HOSC discussed the initial planning for the strategic partnership between Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust and Ipswich Hospital Trust. It was agreed that a further update should be considered 3-4 months later. An extract of the minute of that discussion is attached overleaf.

This latest update report is attached for consideration. No witnesses have been asked to attend. The HOSC Chairman has indicated that, in this instance, this item will be taken solely as a written update.

Action required

- (i) To consider the update received and issues arising; and
- (i) To consider any further monitoring and/or updates required which the newly constituted HOSC, post-May elections, should be recommended to build into its future work programme.

Extract minute from 9 November 2016 meeting of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

6 Colchester Hospital/Ipswich Hospital long term partnership

The Committee considered a report (HOSC/57/16) on the new long term partnership between Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust (IHT) and Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust (CHUFT).

The following were in attendance to participate in a question and answer session on how the partnership was progressing:

- David White, Chair, Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust (IHT) and Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust (CHUFT)
- Dr Shane Gordon, Director of Integration, Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust (CHUFT).

Nick Hulme, Chief Executive, Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust, sent his apologies for not being able to attend for this item.

During the discussion the following was acknowledged, highlighted or questioned:

- A series of poor Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection reports at CHUFT had accelerated the discussions between the two hospitals to work in partnership. The CQC was in regular contact with the senior managers and mindful that the hospitals needed time to implement improvements;
- The challenges both hospitals faced with financing, recruitment and size of catchment areas;
- Senior managers had recently met with local MPs to highlight the impact of the current funding settlement on hospital services;
- Members noted that the hospital boards had held a board-to-board meeting;
- The hospitals would be information gathering and testing assumptions during the next three months and working to develop a communications and engagement plan;
- Healthwatch Essex had been advised of the approach being taken and was involved with the development of the partnership plan. Tom Nutt, Chief Executive Officer, Healthwatch Essex, was on the Sustainability and Transformation Plan Steering Group and aware of the partnership discussions;
- Members emphasised the importance of engaging with district and borough councils as they had useful links with other local organisations;
- Clinical links were being developed and the hospitals were looking at how their corporate services could be brought together;
- A&E and Maternity departments were needed on both sites;

- Councillor Wood raised concerns about local media reports indicating that CHUFT's maternity unit had closed on five occasions [Afternote: information relating to the accuracy of Councillor Wood's comments and the BBC Look East bulletins were responded to out of meeting];
- Members highlighted the need to take into account the distance and time it takes to travel between hospital sites, particularly for those in rural areas without access to public transport;
- The national caps on costs for agency staff, except for doctors, meant that hospitals were encouraged to become less dependent upon temporary staff. The overall dependency on agency nursing at CHUFT had reduced by 15%;
- The focus on the capabilities and skills set of staff and the possible exchange of staff between hospitals;
- Work had begun on putting together a revised senior executive team at CHUFT. The appointment of Dr Barbara Buckley as Managing Director at CHUFT would help strengthen the senior leadership team. A new Nursing Director would be appointed in the new year.

The Committee **agreed**:

- a) That HOSC be provided with a further update in three to four months' time.
- b) That HOSC be provided with details of the Communications and Engagement Plan once developed.

The report was otherwise **noted**.

The contributors were thanked for their attendance and they left the meeting at this point.