

Report to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20th November 2013

The Future of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust – North Staffordshire Perspective – Next Steps



Report Author: Mark Bailey
Job Title: Head of Business Improvement & Partnerships
Email: mark.bailey@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk
Telephone: (01782) 742751

Introduction

For the Committee to consider the next steps in regard to the developing proposals around the future of the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust and the impact of these proposals on North Staffordshire health provision – in particular, the University Hospital of North Staffordshire (UHNS). The paper covers recommendations for the Committee to consider around how the implementation of these proposals could be scrutinised by both Newcastle under Lyme B.C. (NuLBC) and also the other local authorities representing North Staffordshire (Staffordshire County Council, Stoke on Trent City Council and Staffordshire Moorlands DC).

Background

Members will recall that, following the publication by the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Special Administrators (TSAs) of draft recommendations on the future of services at Stafford and Cannock Chase hospitals in early August 2013, NuLBC made representations to the TSAs based on the potential implications of these draft recommendations on UHNS and also wider health care in North Staffordshire. The work of the TSAs has been driven by financial concerns about the future viability of the Mid-Staffordshire Trust; concerns about the number of patients seen at Stafford and Cannock Chase hospitals (and whether these numbers justify the provision of some services at these locations); and the need to continue to attract and retain clinical staff. The headline recommendation relates to the dissolving of the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Trust and the transfer of Stafford Hospital to be run by UHNS.

These draft recommendations, therefore, mainly covered the following areas (in relation to moving services from Stafford Hospital potentially to UHNS: -

- Maternity services – the TSAs’ draft recommendations state that there are too few babies born at Stafford Hospital to make the service economically viable, and so this will be moved – at the appropriate time – to other hospitals (including UHNS), with shared consultant-led care (pre- and post-natal) across Stafford Hospital and UHNS
- Children – the TSAs recommend that children should not longer be admitted to Stafford Hospital as in-patients and that this service should be transferred to other hospitals (including UHNS)
- Emergency surgery – the TSAs recommend that major emergency surgery should no longer be carried out at Stafford Hospital and should be provided by other hospitals such as UHNS (with a related impact on the critical care facility at Stafford Hospital)
- UHNS would also, under the recommendations from the TSAs, be responsible for a number of areas of elective surgery delivered at Stafford Hospital. These include orthopaedic, ear/nose/throat, and plastic surgery operations

As part of these representations, NuLBC requested that consultation on the draft recommendations set out by the TSAs be carried out with residents in the Borough of Newcastle under Lyme. Despite this, the TSAs’ consultation focused on the catchment area of the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Trust, which excludes Newcastle under Lyme Borough. The main consultation process, therefore, began on 6th August 2013.

As a consequence of these developments, NuLBC – following the passing of a Full Council motion on the issue (11th September 2013) – worked with UHNS and the TSAs to set up a series of consultation events in the Borough of Newcastle under Lyme (events also took place in Stoke on Trent). As a result, information was included on the NuLBC website on the consultation, together with consultation documents left at other locations and a public meeting was held on 23rd September 2013 in the Council Chamber at the Civic Offices in Newcastle under Lyme.

The result of this consultation was the collation of a document setting out the views of Newcastle under Lyme residents, which was sent to the TSAs in time for the consultation deadline of 1st October 2013. This document was seen by this Committee at its last meeting on 23rd October 2013. Also included in the document were representations from Stoke on Trent City Council and the Stoke on Trent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

It is now expected that the TSAs will produce their final report setting out their confirmed recommendations in mid- to late-November (it may be that the final report is available for the Health Scrutiny Committee meeting on 20th November). Concerns, however, remain about the financial basis for these recommendations and at what point UHNS will be in a position – both financially and clinically – to take on the additional patients in the areas set out above.

These concerns – together with the specific concerns expressed about the particular service areas identified by the TSAs (maternity, emergency surgery and children) – suggest that there is a role for local authority scrutiny in this process. This is based on the fact that elected Members represent the people and families who are likely to be mainly affected by these proposed changes. A number of concerns have been expressed in the consultation document referred to above, such as the impact on maternity services and whether quality of care can be maintained through these changes. In addition, the pattern of health care in the local area is a complex one and it is not easy to see how the different bodies involved in ensuring implementation of the TSA recommendations could easily be scrutinised by any other body than the relevant local authority.

In addition to these considerations, it should be recognised, as the consultation document submitted to the TSAs recognised, that health care and the impact of the proposed changes does not neatly fit into local government boundaries. Both the pattern of patient care; health provision and social care – together with other services such as housing – forms multiple organisational links which cover the whole of the North Staffordshire area (defined in this case as the Stoke on Trent, Newcastle under Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands local authority areas).

To this end, therefore, a number of options present themselves to the Committee: -

- Scrutiny of the recommendations and their implementation can be covered by the NuLBC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee alone (Not Recommended)
- A Joint Committee can be set up with other local authorities representing North Staffordshire (including invitations to Staffordshire County Council, Stoke on Trent City Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council) (Recommended)
- The issues concerned can be scrutinised by Staffordshire County Council alone (Not Recommended)
- The Committee can decide not to include the issue as part of its Work Plan (Not Recommended)

Members of the Committee are asked to consider these options and choose one as a recommendation for Full Council to decide upon at its meeting on 27th November 2013.

Members will note that the option for a Joint Committee with other North Staffordshire local authorities is recommended, as this potentially offers the best opportunity to consider the widest possible implications of any proposed changes for the local population in North Staffordshire; reflects the realities of health care provision and hospital attendance in North Staffordshire; and also reflects the

organisation and coverage area of a number of the health bodies also affected by these proposals, such as the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire NHS Partnership Trust (who are commissioned to have responsibility for a number of areas of adult social care).

The questions set out in the next section of this paper – some originally identified by Stoke on Trent CC in the consultation document submitted to the TSAs in October – potentially provide a basis for the work of a Joint Committee. These cover the following areas: -

- The financial issues connected to the proposals
- The impact of service changes on the residents of North Staffordshire
- The impact on other work currently going on in the NHS in partnership with local authorities and others (e.g. around moving from treatment to prevention)
- The management of the transition from the current to the proposed arrangements

It is further suggested that the Joint Committee is made up of eight elected Members covering all the Councils concerned. Nominations for members of the Joint Committee will be a matter for each local authority, but it is suggested that Staffordshire County Council – given the subject matter - is represented by at least one elected Member covering a division in North Staffordshire and possibly a member of its Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee and that NuLBC nominates the relevant Portfolio Holder and the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee. It is further suggested to the Committee that a Joint Committee acts on a task and finish basis and meets quarterly at different locations in order to allow members of the public from each area to attend meetings. The Chair of the Joint Committee would be a matter for the Joint Committee itself. Finally, the work of the Joint Committee would be reported back to each local authority via the respective Health Scrutiny Committees.

Questions to be addressed

The areas to be considered are set out above, but can be framed as follows: -

- Whether the NuLBC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee support the proposal for a North Staffordshire Joint Committee to be set up to consider the proposals from the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Trust Administrators and the impact of these proposals on the residents of North Staffordshire?
- Whether any Joint Committee (if approved) should focus on the areas listed above – finance; impact on residents of service changes; implications for other NHS work; and the management of any transition period?

- What the role of the NuLBC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be if a Joint Committee is approved – should this topic be included on the Borough Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Plan?

Outcomes

The recommendations for the Committee are set out above in detail, but can be summarised as follows: -

- The Committee is asked to consider whether to recommend to Full Council on 27th November 2013 the creation of a Joint Committee – made up of elected representatives from NuLBC, Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council – to oversee key areas of the changes potentially to be implemented from the recommendations of the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Trust Administrators
- The Committee is also asked to consider alternative approaches to the scrutiny of the process set out above. These alternative options – to scrutinise the process as individual councils; to ask Staffordshire County Council to scrutinise the issue alone; or not to scrutinise the issue at all – are set out in detail earlier in this report. None of these options are recommended to the Committee.
- The agreed recommendation of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be communicated to Full Council at its meeting on 27th November 2013, where a final decision will be taken on this matter

Supporting Information

- 'Consultation on the Future of Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust – North Staffordshire Perspectives' – document submitted to the Office of the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Trust Special Administrator on 1st October 2013 (included as part of the NuLBC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda, 23rd October 2013)
- 'Maintaining high quality, safe services for the future' – consultation on the Trust Special Administrators' draft recommendations on the future of services for local people using Stafford and Cannock Chase hospitals – produced by the Office of the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Special Administrator, August 2013

Invited Partners/Stakeholders/Residents

- The Leader of NuLBC will be present at the meeting, as will the Chief Executive

Constraints

- Agreement from other local authorities on involvement in a Joint Committee, as outlined in the report
- The detail of final proposals from the TSAs and any changes which could affect the work of scrutiny
- The implementation of any changes – subject to internal issues with the organisations involved in the NHS

Conclusions

- The report has set out the main proposals from the TSAs for the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust, especially the changes to services at Stafford hospital which could impact on UHNS
- Members have been asked – in the light of the potential implications of the draft recommendations put forward by the TSAs for residents of the Borough and for North Staffordshire as a whole – to agree to the establishment of a Joint Committee with neighbouring local authorities to monitor the situation on an ongoing basis

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)

Councillor John Williams, Stronger and Healthier Neighbourhoods

Local Ward Member (if applicable)

N/A

Background Materials

See above

Appendices

None