

Report to: **East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)**
Date: **6th July 2009**
By: **Director of Law and Personnel**
Title of report: **HOSC work programme**
Purpose of report: **To consider issues in relation to the current HOSC work programme.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

HOSC is recommended:

- 1. To nominate Members to lead a review of nutrition and feeding in hospitals.**
 - 2. To agree to hold an awayday on the 8th September 2009 to incorporate a review of the work programme.**
 - 3. To agree that HOSC should host an event for stakeholders in relation to rural health in order to inform future scrutiny activity in this area.**
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1. Background

1.1 HOSC's remit incorporates scrutiny of any health issue or health service affecting the residents of East Sussex. The committee can proactively identify issues it believes to be of importance to local people for investigation, but also has a duty to respond to service changes proposed by the local NHS. The range of topics HOSC could consider is therefore very wide and is determined by both the committee's and the NHS's priorities.

1.2 The committee's resources, both in terms of Member time and officer support, are of course limited. It is therefore necessary to agree a manageable number of priority issues which the committee will focus on at any one time.

2. HOSC work programme

2.1 HOSC's ongoing work priorities are summarised in the committee's work programme. This programme exists in two versions:

- 'Future work at a glance' – an overview of topics scheduled for future meetings up to 18 months ahead.
- 'Progress review' – a chronological record of progress on each issue being examined by the committee, maintained until work on that topic is concluded.

2.2 The work programme is maintained by scrutiny officers and updated after each HOSC meeting to incorporate the committee's requests for future reports or new items. The updated work programme (both versions) is then made available publicly on the HOSC website www.eastsussexhealth.org.

2.3 The work programme is also subject to a more thorough review on a periodic basis through HOSC awaydays. These events enable the Committee to spend time reviewing priorities, considering which new topics merit consideration by the committee, and determining the best way to investigate these topics – whether through a committee item, short-term task group or full scrutiny review. A revised work programme is then prepared by scrutiny officers for agreement at its next committee meeting. The last full review of the work programme was undertaken at a HOSC awayday in May 2008.

3. Current work programme issues

3.1 The current HOSC work programme – future work at a glance – is attached at appendix 1 for information.

3.2 It was agreed at the HOSC awayday in May 2008 that a scrutiny review would be undertaken on nutrition and feeding in hospitals. Following the conclusion of the committee's review of stroke care this new review can now be initiated. The Committee will need to nominate three or four Members to lead this review.

3.3 It is over a year since the last full review of the work programme by the committee. In order to consider which topics can be concluded, which new topics require consideration and potential future scrutiny reviews, it is recommended that HOSC hold an awayday in September 2009. To inform this discussion, it is proposed that the session includes information from NHS East Sussex Downs and Weald/NHS Hastings and Rother on the health needs of the county and their strategic commissioning plans.

3.4 Recent HOSC work has included a number of issues relating to services based in the county's main urban centres of Eastbourne and Hastings such as the development of GP led health centres and location of maternity units. To ensure the committee is giving equal consideration to the health needs of rural areas, it is proposed that HOSC hosts an event in autumn 2009 to bring together rural stakeholders with service commissioners and providers to look at rural health issues. This would inform the committee's future work in this area and may prompt issues for inclusion in the HOSC work programme.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The HOSC work programme sets out the committee's priority topics for investigation and guides the use of HOSC resources. This paper sets out proposals for developing and reviewing the work programme over the coming months.

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