

Report to: East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

Date of meeting: 10 December 2020

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: Eastbourne Station Health Centre

Purpose: To consider whether the NHS decision on the future of the Eastbourne Station Health Centre is in the best interest of the health service in East Sussex

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to consider whether the East Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group's decision as set out in paragraph 2.1 in relation to Eastbourne Station Health Centre is in the best interest of the health service in East Sussex.

1. Background

- 1.1. On 29 March 2018 HOSC considered a report by the local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) on the proposed closure of the Eastbourne and Hastings Walk-in Centres.
- 1.2. Under health scrutiny legislation, NHS organisations are required to consult HOSCs about a proposed service change which would constitute a 'substantial development or variation' to services for the residents of the HOSC area. The HOSC may then make comments in response to the proposals consulted on prior to the CCG's decision.
- 1.3. The Committee resolved that the proposals constituted a 'substantial development or variation to services' requiring formal consultation by the CCGs with HOSC.
- 1.4. The CCGs subsequently revised their proposals and the Committee agreed on 26 September 2019 that the proposals for Hastings no longer constituted a substantial variation to services.
- 1.5. The walk-in centre in Eastbourne is located at the Eastbourne Station Health Centre alongside a GP practice. The CCG proposed to close the walk-in centre and disperse the GP patient list, resulting in the closure of the whole facility.
- 1.6. HOSC established a Review Board to consider the evidence in relation to the proposed closure of the Eastbourne Station Health Centre in detail and prepare a report and any recommendations as the Committee's response to the consultation. The Board comprised Cllrs Belsey, Mrs Barnes, Morris and Turner, and Jennifer Twist; the Review Board elected Cllr Belsey as the Chair.
- 1.7. The Review Board considered a wide range of written and oral evidence from NHS and other witnesses and agreed a draft report and recommendations.
- 1.8. The HOSC agreed on 10th September to endorse the draft report; agreed to allow the Review Board to finalise the report after considering the outcome of the public consultation (which was not completed at the time of the HOSC meeting); and agreed to refer the final report to East Sussex CCG for consideration as part of their decision making process.
- 1.9. The Review Board submitted the final report to the CCG ahead of its Governing Body meeting on 9th December for consideration alongside the outcome of the public consultation and the CCG's Decision Making Business Case (DMBC).

2. Supporting information

NHS Decision

2.1. The East Sussex CCG Governing Body is recommended on the 9th December to:

Approve the post-consultation Decision Making Business Case; specifically to:

- *carry out a managed dispersal of the ESHC GP list to the new Victoria Medical Centre only once the centre's branch surgery in Eastbourne town centre has been established.*
- *commission GP and community nurse drop-in clinics (at least weekly) in the town centre to meet the medical and nursing needs of rough sleepers and homeless patients*
- *decommission the WIC function at ESHC*
- *following the list dispersal, continue to commission the walk-in aspect of the service at ESHC for a short period (likely three to four months)*

2.2. The CCG further proposes to develop a wide-ranging communication and engagement programme, including the recruitment of care navigators.

2.3. The DMBC and its covering report are attached as **appendix 1** to this report. The DMBC provides more detail of the proposed decision and sets out the reasons for taking it. The DMBC also includes a summary of the Equality Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) and Quality Impact Assessment (QIA) (section 7); and the public consultation feedback report (section 4). The [full agenda pack of the East Sussex CCG Governing Body is available on the CCG's website](#) and includes full versions of the EHIA, QIA and consultation report.

2.4. Confirmation as to whether the CCG Governing Body took this decision will be provided to the HOSC verbally on the 10th December.

Response to HOSC's recommendations

2.5. Appendix 2 is the HOSC report submitted to the East Sussex CCG Governing Body for consideration prior to its decision. HOSC's recommendations, all of which have been agreed, are set out in Appendix 3 with responses by the CCG on how they plan to meet each recommendation.

HOSC role in considering NHS decisions

2.6. Health regulations allow a HOSC, once the CCG has taken its decision, to consider whether the decision in relation to the proposed service change is in the best interests of the health service in its area. In reaching the view, the Committee should take into account the evidence gathered during its review and the responses to its recommendations.

2.7. If a HOSC does not consider the decision to be in the best interests of the health service in its area, it has the option to refer the decision to the Secretary of State for Health for review. Any referral may not be made unless a HOSC is satisfied that reasonably practicable steps have been taken to try to reach agreement with the local NHS. Thus, should a HOSC consider that the CCG's decision is not in the best interests of the local health service, it would need to consider whether all possible steps have been taken to reach an agreement, prior to making a referral.

2.8. Any referral that HOSC makes to the Secretary of State *must* be accompanied by, amongst other things:

- an explanation of the reasons for making the referral;
- a summary of the evidence considered, including any evidence of the effect or potential effect of the proposal on the sustainability or otherwise of the health service in the area; and
- an explanation of any steps that the HOSC has taken to try to reach agreement with the CCG.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1. The Committee is recommended to consider whether the East Sussex CCG's decision in relation to Eastbourne Station Health Centre as set out in paragraph 2.1 is in the best interest of the health service in East Sussex.

3.2. If HOSC determines that the CCG's decisions are not in the best interests of the health service, the Committee will need to consider whether or not to refer the matter to the Secretary of State for Health and to agree the grounds for such a referral. The Committee must consider whether all practicable steps to reach local agreement have been taken before making a referral.

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