

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCILHEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 3RD SEPTEMBER 2008Report by the Chief Executive and Director of Administration on the Annual Scrutiny Plan of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2008-09SUMMARY

Each year the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees an Annual Scrutiny Plan setting out the issues on which it proposes to undertake scrutiny in the coming year. This report reviews progress on the 2007-08 plan (Paper No. 07-793) and makes proposals for the Annual Scrutiny Plan for 2008-09.

The vast majority of topics identified in the 2007-08 Annual Scrutiny Plan have been addressed, although one, delayed discharges, will be carried forward for consideration in 2008-09.

A large part of the Committee's activity in 2008-09 will be taken up with continuing commitments to maintain an overview of service performance and to follow up on work commenced in previous years. However, five new topics are proposed: NHS complaints; confidentiality, NHS continuing care, maternity care, and acute inpatient mental health services.

It is inevitable that a number of issues will arise during the year which require urgent scrutiny. The proposed programme allows limited scope for this, but if the number of urgent scrutiny items is higher than anticipated it may mean that it is not possible to address the full plan during the year.

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to agree the Annual Scrutiny Plan for 2008/09.

1. **Recommendations.** The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to adopt the Annual Scrutiny Plan for 2008/09 as set out paragraphs 5 and 6 below. If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approve any views, comments or additional recommendations on the report, these will be submitted to the Executive or to the relevant NHS body as appropriate for their consideration.
2. **Introduction.** Since its formation, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has adopted Annual Scrutiny Plans, setting out the range of topics on which it proposes to undertake scrutiny during the coming year. The present paper reviews progress made on the 2007/08 Annual Scrutiny Plan (07-793), and proposes topics for scrutiny at meetings of the Committee from October 2008 to September 2009.
3. **Progress in 2007/08.** The progress made on the areas of work identified in the 2007/08 Annual Scrutiny Plan is set out below:
 - (a) *Regular performance reports.* Reporting on the performance of local NHS Trusts continued, with reports presented to the Committee at their meetings on 5th

September 2007, 3rd January 2008 and 29th May 2008. The phasing of these reports was changed so that the Committee were able to review the full year data for 2007-08 shortly after it became available.

- (b) *Progress reporting.* Routine monitoring of action taken in response to recommendations agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has continued, with reports being presented to the Committee at their meetings on 31st October 2007, 6th February 2008, and 29th May 2008.
- (c) *Financial Recovery Plans.* St George's Healthcare NHS Trust is now the only local NHS Trust with an accumulated deficit. A paper on the Trust's financial position (Paper No. 08-437) was considered by the Committee at their meeting on 29th May 2008. This showed that the Trust had achieved an unexpectedly large financial surplus during 2007-08, although there remained an accumulated deficit financed by a loan from NHS London, and further savings were required before it could attain recurrent financial balance;
- (d) *Annual Health Check.* The Committee considered the results of the 2006-07 Annual Health Check at their meeting on 31st October 2007 (Paper No. 07-952). Whilst Wandsworth PCT's financial rating improved from 'weak' to 'fair', the overall results were disappointing, with both the St George's Healthcare NHS Trust and the South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust having scored worse than any other trusts in their respective peer groups. At their meeting on 9th April 2008 the Committee agreed their submission to the 2007/08 Annual Health Check (Paper No. 08-310). This meeting also received feedback from the Healthcare Commission on the Committee's previous submission, suggesting that the form and content were found useful by the Commission.
- (e) *Drug and Alcohol Action Team plans.* At their meeting on 29th May 2008 the Committee received a paper setting out the achievements of the Drug and Alcohol Action Team in 2007-08, and supported the Team's plans for 2008-09 (Paper No. 08-442). The Committee noted the Team's name had changed to include explicit reference to its work on alcohol misuse, reflecting an increased focus on this topic. This focus has been demonstrated by the Team's development of a formal strategy on alcohol misuse, which is the subject of a separate report to this meeting.
- (f) *Variations in spending priorities.* The Committee reviewed the latest data from the NHS Programme Budgeting project at their meeting on 3rd January 2008 (Paper No. 08-60). Although the Committee recognised the potential importance of this project as a means of comparing the spending priorities of different primary care trusts, it was disappointed that continuing problems with data quality and consistency meant that it was not possible to draw any conclusions.
- (g) *Dental services.* The Committee received two reports on dental care (Paper Nos. 07-951 and 08-57). These reviewed the findings of a survey by Patient and Public Involvement Fora of patients' experience of access to dental care as well as data on the number of people accessing dental care in Wandsworth. Whilst this analysis did not support a contention that dental contract introduced in April 2006 had worsened access to dental care, it showed that there had been a long-run decline in access to dental services over the past ten years, which the new contract had not reversed. The proportion of Wandsworth residents who had attended a dentist as an NHS patient within the past two years was below the London and national averages.

- (h) *Mental health services.* At their meeting on 31st October 2008 the Committee received reports on action plans arising from the 2007 improvement inspection of community health services (Paper no. 07-947) and the accommodation review (Paper No. 07-948). At the same meeting the Chief Executive of the South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust gave a presentation on the Trust's vision and values, in preparation for its application for Foundation Trust status. A proposed response to the Trust's application for Foundation Trust status is to be considered at this meeting.
- (i) *Access to primary care.* A report on access to GP services (Paper No. 08-168) was considered at the Committee meeting held on 6th February 2008. This focussed on the uptake of the Locally Enhanced Service scheme offered by the PCT to reward GP services offering extended opening hours. It was noted that 45% of practices within the Borough had signed up to this scheme, although the extension to opening hours was very varied and there were gaps in take-up in some parts of the Borough. A further report, on the national GP Access Survey, is to be considered at this meeting.
- (j) *Public involvement in health.* A major area of concern for the Committee over the past year was the abolition of Patient and Public Involvement Fora, and the establishment of Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) as their successor bodies. Wandsworth Care Alliance was appointed as the 'Host' organisation for the Wandsworth LINK (Paper No. 08-311). Whilst this transition, which was necessitated by legislative change, has inevitably disrupted work programmes and led to some loss of expertise, Wandsworth Borough Council was amongst the first authorities to successfully commission a Host organisation and has taken the opportunity to bring together arrangements for supporting user involvement in health and social care.
- (k) *Healthier communities strategy.* On 31st October 2007 the Committee received a paper identifying priorities for inclusion in a healthier communities strategy (Paper No. 07-949). This was taken further at the meeting on 29th May 2008, which received a report on progress in the development of a sustainable community strategy, and considered the chapter of the 'Story of Place' dealing with health and health care issues. The Sustainable Communities Strategy, which is to be completed in the autumn of 2008, will incorporate a vision and objectives for improvement of community health in Wandsworth.
- (l) *Immunisation.* Immunisation has been a major area of concern for the Committee. Reports of the development by the PCT of an action plan to tackle low uptake of childhood immunisation were considered on 31st October 2007 and 3rd January 2008 (Paper Nos. 07-950 and 08-58), and a report on progress in implementing the plan is on the agenda for this meeting.
- (m) *Long-term conditions.* A report on progress in implementing the plans on long-term conditions agreed by the PCT since the major review conducted in 2005 is on the agenda for this meeting.
- (n) *Parking at hospitals.* A report on arrangements for parking at hospitals and health care facilities was considered by the Committee on 3rd January 2008 (Paper No. 08-55). In general, this found that local NHS Trusts adhere closely to good practice guidance on car parking arrangements.

- (o) *Palliative and end-of-life care.* The Committee considered a report on palliative and end-of-life care at their meeting on 29th May 2008 (Paper No. 08-439). It was noted that the PCT had recently undertaken a review of end-of-life care. This identified a number of gaps and weaknesses in existing provision, and recommended the appointment of a project manager and steering group to take responsibility for the required improvements.
- (p) *Delayed transfers of care.* As yet, the planned investigation of delayed transfers of care is not complete. A report will be presented to the Committee at their meeting on 29th October 2008.
- (q) *Public consultations.* The following possible public consultations were identified in the 2007/08 annual scrutiny plan:
 - (i) Long-term plans for services in Battersea and North Wandsworth. A report on the 'pre-consultation' proposals by the PCT for services in Battersea and North Wandsworth was considered at the meeting held on 31st October 2007 (Paper No. 07-946). At the meeting held on 6th February 2008 the Chief Executive of the Primary Care Trust gave a presentation on the PCT's formal consultation document, and on 9th April 2008 the Committee agreed a response to this consultation (Paper No. 08-309). The PCT decisions following consultation are a matter for discussion at this meeting;
 - (ii) Family planning services. Plans for changes to community sexual health services have not yet been developed sufficiently for formal consultation to take place, and it is now anticipated that consultation will commence towards the end of 2008. Members were concerned at the closure of a sexual health clinic session at St Christopher's Clinic, on the Winstanley Estate (Paper No. 08-438), but agreed that formal consultation on this matter would not be required, providing that efforts were made to reinstate the clinic in the immediate neighbourhood;
 - (iii) St George's Strategic Outline Case. A report on the submission of the Strategic Outline Case for redevelopment of St George's Hospital was considered by the Committee at their meeting on 29th May 2008 (Paper No. 08-436). Members agreed that, as the Strategic Outline Case proposed improvements in the physical environment but no service changes, formal consultation was not required. However, they were concerned at the lengthy proposed timescale for the development and asked the Trust to consider ways in which it could be implemented more rapidly; and
 - (iv) Healthcare for London: A Framework for Action. Formal consultation on this plan took place between late November 2007 and early March 2008. As this made proposals for changes to the overall pattern of healthcare in London, a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee of all London Boroughs was formed and agreed a collective response. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee also undertook its own consideration and agreed a local response (Paper No. 08-167).

4. **Issues arising in the course of the year.** In addition to the above items, which were contained in the Annual Scrutiny Plan, the Committee considered the following issues:

- (a) *Friends of St George's.* Members were concerned at reports that a major refurbishment of the main entrance to St George's had led to the Friends of St

George's, a local charity supporting the hospital, being evicted from their fund-raising shop without any adequate alternative being offered. This was considered by the Committee on 3rd January 2008 (Paper No. 08-54). The St George's Healthcare Trust representatives at the meeting promised that a suitable alternative would be found. The Trust has subsequently adhered to this commitment, and the matter is now satisfactorily resolved;

- (b) *Disabled Access to St John's Therapy Centre.* The same meeting of the Committee was alerted to concerns raised by the Wandsworth Access Association about disabled access arrangements at the new St John's Therapy Centre (Paper No. 08-56). The Primary Care Trust undertook to ensure that these concerns were fully addressed;
- (c) *The Henderson Hospital.* At their meeting on 6th February 2008 the Committee were alerted to a proposal from the South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust to close the Henderson Hospital, a service in Sutton for people with a personality disorder, in view of a reduction in the number of referrals (Paper No. 08-165). The Committee took the view that this hospital closure represented a significant change and that formal consultation would therefore be required, a view that was subsequently shared by most other overview and scrutiny committees within the South West London sector. As a highly specialist service serving most of Southern England, it was necessary to convene a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the purposes of reviewing the proposals and responding to consultation. The London Borough of Sutton has taken the lead in establishing the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which held its first meeting in July 2008. However, the number of patients in the hospital had continued to fall and it was closed as being no longer clinically viable prior to this meeting, in April 2008. The closure remains temporary, pending the recommendations of the committee on the changes to commissioning of specialist personality disorder services which underlay the closure.
- (d) *Stroke care.* The Committee received a report on the National Stroke Strategy (Paper No. 08-171). This report also included details of a local pilot programme under which St George's Hospital was to be designated as the 'hub' for the acute stroke treatment in South West London. Members supported the establishment of this pilot.
- (e) *National Blood Service.* In the course of the year, Members became aware of local concerns that strategic plans for the National Blood Service would lead to a downgrading of the Tooting Blood Centre based at St George's Hospital. A report on the strategy was presented to the Committee on 29th May 2008 (Paper No. 08-433). Senior representatives of the National Blood Service attended this meeting and responded to Members' concerns over these plans.

5. **Continuing work in 2007/08.** It is proposed that a first commitment in the work programme for 2008/09 is the continuation or completion of a number of strands of activity that were pursued during 2007/08. These include the following:

- (a) *Regular performance reports.* The regular performance reports continue to generate substantial debate, enabling Members to identify key challenges within local health services and to hold NHS managers to account. These reports will continue to be presented to alternate meetings of the Committee.

Annual Scrutiny Plan

- (b) *Progress reporting.* The presentation of progress reports to alternate meetings of the Committee has proved effective in monitoring action taken in response to the Committee's recommendations, and will continue.
 - (c) *St. George's Healthcare Trust financial status.* Despite its improved position, the St George's Healthcare Trust still faces considerable challenges in achieving and maintaining financial balance. Progress will continue to be monitored and reported to the Committee.
 - (d) *Annual Health Check.* The outcome of the Healthcare Commission Annual Health Check for 2007/08 will be reported to the Committee at their meeting on 29th October 2008. The Committee will, in consultation with Wandsworth LINK, contribute a commentary on the local NHS Trusts' performance in 2008/09 against the standards assessed in the Annual Health Check.
 - (e) *Drug and Alcohol Action Team plans.* The Committee will continue to monitor the performance of the Drug and Alcohol Action Team, and will consider its plans for 2009/10.
 - (f) *Annual Public Health report.* The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a commitment to review the Annual Reports of Wandsworth's Director of Public Health, both to scrutinise local activity on public health and to identify issues of particular relevance to the Council. Although the 2006/07 Annual Public Health Report was presented to the Wandsworth PCT Board in July 2008, it has not yet been published in its final format. This report will therefore be considered at the meeting of the Committee to be held on 29th October 2008.
 - (g) *Access to primary care.* Despite the progress that has been made, access to primary care, and especially the opening hours of GP surgeries, fall well short of the standards the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed are desirable. Progress will be monitored and reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - (h) *The Local Involvement Network.* In the course of the year the Wandsworth Local Involvement Network will agree its governance arrangements and work programme. Further work will be undertaken to agree arrangements for co-operation between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Local Involvement Network.
 - (i) *Immunisation.* Improvement of immunisation rates remains a major challenge, and progress on implementation of the PCT's immunisation action plan will continue to be monitored and reported.
 - (j) *Delayed transfers of care.* It was intended to produce a report on delayed transfers of care during 2007/08. This was not achieved and a report will therefore be presented to the Committee on 29th October 2008.
 - (k) *Public consultations.* The PCT's public consultation on community-based sexual health services, which was originally scheduled to take place during 2007/08 is now likely to commence in late 2008 and conclude in early 2009. The PCT is also intending to consult on the development of primary health care in Tooting. Reports on both consultations will be presented to the OSC.
6. **New topics for consideration.** The following new topics are proposed for inclusion in the 2008/09 Annual Scrutiny Plan:
- (a) *NHS Complaints.* Over a number of years the performance of the St George's Healthcare NHS Trust in responding to complaints within the target timetable has

fallen short of expectations. The Trust has argued that patients are more concerned to receive a thorough than a rapid response, and this is no longer a performance measure that is regularly reported. It is suggested that the Committee undertakes a review of the procedures followed by the Trust to achieve both timely and thorough response to complaints. Whilst the issue has arisen specifically in relation to St George's, it is recommended that the review should be extended to cover all local trusts as the issues are likely to be similar and there may be benefit from comparing approaches.

- (b) *Confidentiality.* The recent theft of laptops from St George's Hospitals, containing details of a large number of patients, gave rise to considerable public concern. Whilst the incident itself has been the subject of a detailed investigation by the St George's Healthcare NHS Trust, it highlights the importance patients attach to the confidentiality of their data, as well as the challenges faced by NHS Trusts with developments of information technology. It is therefore recommended that the measures taken by NHS Trusts to maintain patient confidentiality should be a scrutiny topic for the coming year.
- (c) *NHS Continuing Care.* Wandsworth Primary Care Trust has recently approached the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in connection with a plan to close Roehampton Lodge, a continuing care facility at Barnes Hospital, which it believes falls short of the standards now expected. As the facility currently has only three patients, only two of whom are Wandsworth residents, it must be accepted that direct work with these patients and their carers is more appropriate than use of formal consultation procedures. However, it is important that agreeing to this is not seen as accepting a further diminution of the NHS contribution to continuing care, and a review of the role of the activity of the local NHS in this area may therefore be timely.
- (d) *Maternity care.* In recent years there has been an increase in the number of births in Wandsworth, as well as neighbouring boroughs, which has placed pressure on all local maternity services. The 2007 Healthcare Commission review classed St George's Healthcare NHS Trust as one of the 'least well performing' providers, with the Trust scoring particularly poorly in relation to patient experience of services. On the other hand, some other assessments have given the Trust a more favourable rating, especially in relation to clinical quality. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been keen to champion delivery of services in smaller and friendlier environments, and has proposed that the Bolingbroke Hospital would be an ideal location for this. It is suggested that a scrutiny of local maternity services would help to disentangle the issues and to make recommendations for future provision.
- (e) *Acute inpatient mental health services.* In the recent Healthcare Commission review of acute inpatient mental health services, South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust was assessed as 'fair', indicating that it only meets minimum requirements. Overall scores in this review were low, reflecting the fact that this is one of the most challenging areas of service to deliver. The Mental Health Trust is making a major investment in the physical environment of acute mental health services on the Springfield site. It is suggested that a scrutiny of this area will provide an understanding of how these physical changes tie in to plans for service improvements, and may lead to recommendations on this.

7. **Scope for addressing issues arising during the year.** It is likely that a number of issues will arise during the year which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will wish to address

Annual Scrutiny Plan

as a matter of urgency. However, the capacity to take on issues in addition to those identified above is very limited. If more than one or two issues requiring urgent action arise during the year, it may be necessary to postpone some of the work contained in this annual scrutiny plan.

8. **Conclusion.** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was able to undertake work on all but one of the items agreed in its Annual Scrutiny Plan for 2007/08. The scrutiny plan for 2008/09 includes continuation of or follow-up to many of the areas of work that have been addressed in the past year. However, five new areas of work are proposed. It is likely that some additional items requiring urgent scrutiny will become apparent in the course of the year, but as capacity to take on additional work is limited a demand for urgent scrutiny may affect progress with the planned scrutiny programme.

Town Hall
Wandsworth SW18 2PU

26th August 2008

G.K. JONES

Chief Executive and Director of
Administration

Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

All reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committees, regulatory and other committees, the Executive and full Council can be viewed on the Council's website (www.wandsworth.gov.uk/committ) unless the report was published before May 2001 in which case the committee secretary can supply it.