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Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee
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Mr Martin Houghton
IRP
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5 February 2021

Dear Mr Houghton,

Modernising Health and Care Services in the Teignmouth and Dawlish Area

This letter is an exploratory one seeking advice from the IRP. This resulted from a meeting on 26 January 2021 of Devon County Council's Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee where an item was considered on *Modernising Health and Care Services in the Teignmouth and Dawlish Area* and the Committee resolved to:

make an informal approach to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel seeking its advice and views about the issues and concerns raised in regard to the proposals (and whether the proposals serve the best interest of health services in the area) and the adequacy of the consultation process before any further action is considered.¹

The Committee was cognisant of the role the IRP has in providing '*ongoing advice to NHS organisations, local authorities including overview and scrutiny committees and other interested bodies on the development of local proposals for service change...*'²

In writing to you I am also mindful of the IRP's advice in response to the 2016 referral about Torrington Community Hospital. Proposals on the reconfiguration of inpatient beds at Torrington Community Hospital were referred to the Secretary of State on the grounds that the changes would not be in the best interest of patients. After an initial assessment the IRP advised the Secretary of State that the referral did not warrant a full review but recognised that '*early engagement with the local community could have been improved upon. The NHS has acknowledged this and taken steps to address matters since. It is right that the focus now must be on the future and learning from mistakes of the past*'³.

The issues raised previously continue to have a bearing upon consultation and change of hospital services today. The substantial development currently being considered is a proposal that arose from plans by Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust to build a new £8million Health and

¹ <https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=25473>

² [How NHS organisations, local authorities and other interested parties can request informal advice](#)

³ <https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s4657/SoS%20letter.pdf>

Wellbeing Centre in the heart of Teignmouth. The formal consultation process began on 1 September 2020. The four elements to the proposal were to:

- a) Move the most frequently used community clinics from Teignmouth Community Hospital to the new Health and Wellbeing Centre.
- b) Move specialist outpatient clinics, except ear nose and throat clinics, from Teignmouth Community Hospital to Dawlish Community Hospital, four miles away.
- c) Move day case procedures from Teignmouth Community Hospital to Dawlish Community Hospital.
- d) Continue with a model of community-based intermediate care, reversing the decision to establish 12 rehabilitation beds at Teignmouth Community Hospital.

The Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee have had regular briefings on the consultation but only from August 2020 onwards. NHS Devon CCG officers attended both informal meetings with the chairs as well as at public Committee on 10 September 2020, 12 November 2020 and 26 January 2021 on this topic as well as providing members with several briefing notes. The Committee was not however, invited to have input on the consultation process before it began or on the content and potential for codesign with local people.

In response to concern about how the consultation process had been run the Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee resolved at their meeting on 12 November 2020 to set up a spotlight review on *Modernising Health and Care Services in the Teignmouth and Dawlish Area*, which was held on 14 December 2020. The Review concentrated on the efficacy of the consultation process. Members met with Healthwatch Devon, Plymouth & Torbay who had been commissioned by NHS Devon CCG as an independent group to take an administrative and oversight role in the consultation and to analyse the responses submitted. Members also met with NHS Devon CCG to discuss their report and interrogate the process undertaken to consider the other possible options. The following conclusion was reached and sent to the 17 December 2020 NHS Devon CCG Governing Body:

Members do not believe that the consultation, from the evidence presented, offers a credible case for change that both clinicians and residents advocate. Co-production is not visible in this consultation and it could not be described as an open collaborative approach. Members cited four examples:

1. **The CCG heavily determined the questions for the survey (many of them closed) carried out by Healthwatch.**
2. **The online meetings were not set up to encourage inter-active conversation on the issues. The technology of Microsoft Teams or Zoom to go into breakout rooms was not utilised.**
3. **Patient experience does not feature in the evaluation of options process.**
4. **A key concern of many residents about the merits or demerits of rehabilitation within a hospital or care home setting were not presented. The proposed change is based on the CCG's belief that the quality of services would be maintained and that capacity of community intermediate home-based care is and will continue to be so effective thus making rehabilitation in a hospital setting redundant.⁴**

During the Spotlight Review members noted that although NHS Devon CCG has been rolling out the intermediate community-based model in other parts of the County, there was no systematic evaluative research co-produced by clinicians, professionals, and service users that presents clear evidence of

⁴ <https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s34265/HAC%20Scrutiny%20Response%20Teignmouth.pdf>

success (using both quantitative and qualitative methodology) to support this extensive change proposed.

On the 17 December 2020 the NHS Devon CCG Governing Body considered the recommendation from Scrutiny in a limited fashion and were at best dismissive of the Scrutiny process. They subsequently approved a series of recommendations which will mean that some services will be moved from Teignmouth Community Hospital to a new Health and Wellbeing Centre in the town centre and some services to Dawlish Community Hospital. The Governing Body also approved a recommendation to continue with a model of community-based intermediate care and reverse a previous decision to establish 12 rehabilitation beds at Teignmouth Community Hospital.

At Committee on 26 January 2021 members considered NHS Devon CCG Governing Body's response to the Spotlight Review and decision taken. Members' questions and discussion points with officers included:

- the local member's support for an informal approach to the IRP to seek independent advice and views before any further proposed actions;
- NHS Devon CCG's acknowledgement concerning the engagement process and subsequent formal consultations and learning points for the future including early engagement with Scrutiny;
- some members' views on the adequacy, timeline and veracity of the consultation process;
- concerns about NHS Devon CCG in addressing the views and concerns highlighted by the consultation and points raised by this Committee's Spotlight Review;
- concerns relating to parking provision and constraints and ongoing dialogue by NHS Devon CCG with local authorities in regard to public transport to mitigate parking constraints;
- concerns about the sufficiency and quality of intermediate rehabilitation care and community care services in the area and whether the interest of health services was best served by NHS Devon CCG's proposals; and
- the threshold required for a formal referral to the Secretary of State and likely outcome.

The Committee subsequently agreed the following recommendations:

- a) that NHS Devon CCG be requested to keep this Committee:
 - (i) closely informed of the progress of their plan via an agreed timetable of updates; and
 - (ii) to provide up to date information on intermediate care operations that include emergency readmissions after discharge, delayed transfers of care and the number of patients that are taken from hospital to a care home bed and if they are able to go home after 6 weeks; and
- b) that the NHS Devon CCG be requested to make an evaluation of the efficacy of intermediate care in the Teignmouth/Dawlish area that includes qualitative patient experience case studies; and
- c) that this Scrutiny Committee makes an informal approach to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel seeking its advice and views about the issues and concerns raised in regard to the proposals (and whether the proposals serve the best interest of health services in the area) and the adequacy of the consultation process before any further action is considered.

In the current substantial development there are enduring questions about the veracity of the consultation process which NHS Devon CCG has undertaken with regards to Teignmouth Hospital and would suggest that mistakes are continuing to be made, which are not serving the best interests of the public. When the matter came before the January 2021 meeting there was considerable local support from residents for the matter to be sent to the Secretary of State. The decision was taken by Committee at this stage to contact the IRP in terms of whether NHS Devon CCG has a case to answer.

It should be said that the Committee remains mindful of its relationship with NHS Devon CCG and while offering the health system, and also the adult social care sector, robust challenge, strives to do this very much from the perspective of a critical friend. Members recognise that little advantage is to

be gained in their Scrutiny role through adversary, however Scrutiny cannot be an afterthought or a tick box exercise but must be front and centre of good governance. With the move to an Integrated Care System, as well as the unprecedented challenge COVID-19 brings in terms of recovery and restoration, it is essential that NHS Devon CCG takes members on this journey with them.

In light of this evidence the Committee invite your consideration of the matter and your advice on the best way to proceed both in this matter and with regard to future consultation exercises building upon the advice previously given to Devon County Council and the NHS Devon CCG.

Timeline of Key Scrutiny Involvement (to date)

- 17 August 2020 – Chairs met with NHS Devon CCG for update on public consultation on the future of services in the Teignmouth and Dawlish area.
- 18 August 2020 – NHS Devon CCG provide members with a briefing document.
- 1 September 2020 – Further NHS Devon CCG briefing circulated to members on the public consultation, which ran from 1 September 2020 – 26 October 2020.
- 10 September 2020 - Chairs met with NHS Devon CCG.
- 11 September 2020 - Financial and travel supporting documents circulated to Committee.
- 12 September 2020 - Modernising Health and Care Services in the Teignmouth and Dawlish Area update report received at Committee, where members agree to set up a spotlight review.
- 12 November 2020 – Further update report from NHS Devon CCG presented to Committee. Members advised by a local member of a petition against the proposal with 2783 signatories.
- 14 December 2020 – Spotlight Review.
- 17 December 2020 – NHS Devon CCG Governing Body receives the report of the Spotlight Review.
- 26 January 2021 – Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee reviews NHS Devon CCG Governing Body decision and agrees a series of recommendations including an informal approach for advice to the IRP.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Sara Randall Johnson

Chair, Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee

Devon County Council