



meeting **HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE**

date **8 November 2005**

agenda item number

Report of the Head of Scrutiny

Health Select Committee membership

Purpose of the Report

1. To clarify the status of the co-opted members of the Health Select Committee.
2. To provide the Select Committee with an opportunity to review its membership.
3. To allow the Select Committee to examine its relationship with the PPI Forums

Background

4. Prior to the abolishment of the Community Health Councils on 1 December 2003, the Chairs of the three Health Councils covering Nottinghamshire were co-opted members of the Health Select Committee.
5. When the Community Health Care Councils were abolished, the Public and Patient Involvement Forums (PPI Forums) were established to partner every NHS Trust and PCT. In Nottinghamshire there are currently 13 PPI Forums.
6. Support to the Forums is provided by two organisations; Age Concern and the Carers Federation. Doncaster and Bassetlaw PPI is supported by Doncaster Council Voluntary Service.

Age Concern (South)	Carers Federation (North)
Broxtowe and Hucknall Gedling Nottingham City Rushcliffe	Ashfield Bassetlaw Mansfield Newark and Sherwood
City Hospital QMC	Sherwood Forest Hospital
East Midlands Ambulance Service	Healthcare Trust

7. At the meeting of the Health Select Committee on 2 December 2003, the Select Committee agreed to co-opt 3 representatives from the newly formed PPI Forums (1 from the north, 1 from the south and 1 from the acute trusts) as voting members of the Select Committee.
8. This decision was reaffirmed in July 2004 and July 2005.
9. The Select Committee currently has co-opted members from:
 - City Hospital PPI Forum (NHS Acute Trust) – vacant
 - Healthcare Trust PPI Forum (NHS Mental Health Trust) – Barbara Venes
 - Bassetlaw PPI Forum (PCT - north) – Mandy Richardson

Issues

Co-Optees

10. The City Hospital PPI Forum member, Gail Maxfield, has recently ended her membership of the Select Committee and a replacement from the PPI Forums is being sought. It is suggested that a letter from the Chair of this Select Committee to Ms Maxfield thanking her for her contribution to the work of the Select Committee be drafted.
11. All of the County Council's Select Committees can co-opt individuals to become members of the Select Committee. The Local Government Act 2003 also allows Select Committees to give these individuals voting rights, as the Health Select Committee has done.
12. However, it has become apparent that in order for co-opted members to be given voting rights the County Council must have a scheme in place to permit this. At present the County Council does not have such a scheme.

13. Therefore co-opted members will not be able to vote on any matter under consideration by the Select Committee.
14. If the Select Committee wishes its co-opted members to be granted voting rights a report would have to be submitted to County Council detailing the scheme and outlining how many voting co-opted members the Select Committee wishes to have.
15. This report to County Council could highlight whether other Select Committees should also be able to grant voting rights to co-opted members and contain information on the perceived benefits and weaknesses of granting voting right to co-opted members.

Membership

16. The Select Committee may also wish to take this opportunity to consider its own membership. Aside from the voting rights issue, is the Committee satisfied that having three added members provides the best mix of expertise and local focus?
17. The Committee could offer co-opted membership, for example, to District Councillors, representatives from organisations involved within the NHS, PCTs, voluntary groups or even to GPs if it is so desired.
18. Given the impending change to PCTs however, and the envisaged resultant change to PPI forums (ie they merge to fall in line with the new PCT structure), the Select Committee may wish to wait until these issues have been resolved prior to making any decision on its membership.

Current relationship with PPI Forums

19. It is important for this Select Committee to continue to strengthen its relationship with the PPI forums across Nottinghamshire. Joint partnership working between the Select Committee and the PPI forums can only strengthen the scrutiny process.
20. PPI forums have been given powers to formally enter and inspect places where NHS services are provided. They are normally drawn from individuals calling upon their experiences as patients, carers or as members of the general public who have had some contact with these NHS bodies.
21. Aside from co-opting PPI forum members to this Select Committee it is proposed that contact is made with each of the PPI forums asking them to forward the agenda and minutes of all of their meetings. Relevant issues may then be brought to the attention of this Select Committee
22. In turn it is proposed to send the PPI forums the agenda and minutes of all future Select Committee meetings and to actively encourage

membership from the PPI forums onto study groups of this Select Committee.

OPTIONS

Voting rights

23. The Select Committee seeks voting rights for its co-opted members and the relevant scheme is sent to County Council for consideration,
or
24. That the three co-opted members of the Health Select Committee remain as non-voting members.

Membership

25. That the Select Committee alters its membership now to an agreed level by inviting other organisations' representatives to join it,
or
26. That the Select Committee maintains its current membership and agrees to review it when the PCT restructure and any resultant changes to PPI Forums has been completed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- i. the Health Select Committee discuss the issues identified in the report and make a decision on the options listed from paragraphs 23 – 26.
- ii. the Chair writes to Ms Gail Maxfield on behalf of the Health Select Committee to thank her for her contribution to the work of the Select Committee.
- iii. Members note the proposals to strengthen relationships with the PPI forums and discuss other ways to assist partnership working between the Select Committee and the PPI forums.

Lynn Senior
Head of Scrutiny

Background Paper
CfPS - Local Authority – Health overview and scrutiny committees and patient and public involvement forums: working together

Legal Comments (PDH 311005)

The legal issues regarding voting rights of co-opted Members are highlighted in the body of the report. There are detailed requirements for the publishing and advertising of co-opted Members voting scheme once one has been agreed by Full Council.