

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

20th September 2010

COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE NHS WHITE PAPER – “EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE: LIBERATING THE NHS” – RECOMMENDATION FROM THE JOINT HEALTH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr B Clayton
Relevant Head of Service	Head of Community Services
Not a Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To conclude a Council response to the invitation to comment on the recent NHS White Paper.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

the comments of the Joint Health Consultative Committee on the NHS White Paper “Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS” as included at paragraph 4.2, below, be adopted as the formal Council response to the consultation, subject to Members’ comments.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In July 2010 the Government published a White Paper, “Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS” (the Executive Summary of which is attached to this report).
- 3.2 The Council was fortunate to be able to receive a briefing on the proposed changes as they might affect Worcestershire from Dr Richard Harling, Director of Public Health, NHS Worcestershire PCT, on 9th August 2010. Following on from this, the Joint Health Consultative Committee on 13th September 2010 considered the broad scope of the changes proposed in order that it might come forward with a corporate response to the White Paper. The Government is seeking comments on the White Paper by 5th October 2010.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Joint Health Consultative Committee considered the information provided by Dr Richard Harling, the Executive Summary of the NHS White Paper and drew upon its collective knowledge of the details of the proposals as included in the White Paper.

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4.2 The Committee considered that the White Paper proposals represented a very significant change in the manner that healthcare provision was organised. Some of the proposals contained within the White Paper were viewed as potentially being of benefit to healthcare provision within the Borough whereas others were viewed more as potential risks. The comments of the Joint Health Consultative Committee are summarised below:

- 1) The locality focus of the proposals contained within the White Paper is broadly welcomed. However, it is recognised that the resultant GP Commissioning Consortia within Worcestershire may well cover populations and geographical scope that are widely differing in their size;
- 2) There is concern that the potential budgetary implications of the changes are unpredictable. The impact of the replacement of Strategic Health Authorities and Primary Care Trusts by GP Commissioning Consortia on administrative and managerial costs are difficult to quantify at present. In addition, the ring-fencing of the health improvement budgets to local authorities is guaranteed at the present time but there is the possibility that situation could change over time;
- 3) The speed with which the proposed changes are to be implemented is considered to be a possible risk to the provision of healthcare within the County given the level of potential disruption that might ensue;
- 4) The greater involvement of local authorities in the provision of healthcare is welcomed although it is recognised that much of this influence would fall to upper tier authorities; and
- 5) There is a realisation that the Borough would need to work hard to ensure that its voice is heard at the County level but there is also a belief that the GP Commissioning Consortia covering Redditch could, in due course, represent a net benefit to the local population.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – NHS White Paper, “Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS” – Executive Summary

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