

---

**Meeting:** Council

**Date:** 14 June 2012

**Subject:** Appointments to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee review of NHS Bedfordshire's Healthier Together Programme

**Report of:** Monitoring Officer

**Summary:** The report informs Council of those Members of the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee that have been appointed to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny review of acute health service provision across the East of England region.

---

**Advising Officer:** John Atkinson, Monitoring Officer

**Contact Officer:** Jonathon Partridge, Scrutiny Policy Adviser (0300 300 4634)

**Public/Exempt:** Public

**Wards Affected:** All

**Function of:** Council

**Key Decision** No

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

Ensuring that acute health services are provided in an appropriate manner across the East of England and in the Central Bedfordshire region in particular supports the Council to achieve its objectives in relation to supporting and caring for an ageing population and promoting healthier lifestyles.

### **Financial:**

1. Any costs arising from the establishment and running of the JHOSC can be met from within existing budgets.

### **Legal:**

2. The Local Authority (overview and scrutiny of health function) Regulations 2001 require that NHS bodies consult relevant overview and scrutiny committees (OSCs) where there is a proposed substantial variation or development of health services in the area. OSCs are statutory consultees and can decide whether or not they wish to respond to consultations.

3. Further to sections 7 and 8 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001, the Secretary of State issued a Direction in 2003 with regard to NHS consultations that cover several local authorities. Where this is the case those authorities' overview and scrutiny committees that wish to be involved in the consultation must form a joint committee. Councils' overview and scrutiny committees cannot choose to be consulted separately.
4. Part D1 of the Council's Constitution states that "Members of the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee may be appointed from time to time to serve on any joint overview and scrutiny committee that may be established with neighbouring authorities to scrutinise health matters under the provisions of Sections 7 and 8 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and subsequent regulations. Such Appointments will normally be made by the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman, subject to the proportionality rules and subsequent report for information to the next Council meeting."
5. Joint Committees are required to be politically proportionate unless the Councils involved agree to waive that requirement.

**Risk Management:**

6. Not applicable.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

7. Not Applicable.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

8. No direct implications arising from this report.

**Public Health**

9. No direct implications arising from this report.

**Community Safety:**

10. Not Applicable.

**Sustainability:**

11. Not Applicable.

**Procurement:**

12. No direct implications arising from this report.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Council notes the appointment of Councillors Drinkwater, Sheppard and Smith as Members of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Councillors Gurney and Goodchild as substitutes.**

## Background

13. At their meeting on 12 December 2011 the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report relating to proposals for a review of acute services in the South East Midlands. The aim of the review was to deliver excellent quality and outcomes for the population and ensure clinical and financial sustainability of the health economy through a review of acute services provided in Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes.
14. The Committee resolved (**Minute SCHH/11/61 refers**) that they considered the review to be a substantial variation of services and that a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) should be appointed for the duration of the review. Subsequently a JHOSC has formally been constituted between Central Bedfordshire, Luton Borough, Bedford Borough, Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire County Council.
15. In January 2012 nominations were sought from Members and substitutes of the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC. Responses were received from 5 Members of the Committee and subsequent to discussion with the Monitoring Officer and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC the following appointments were made:-
  - Members: Cllrs Mrs R J Drinkwater, Ms N J Sheppard and M Smith
  - Substitutes: Cllrs Mrs D B Gurney and Mrs S Goodchild
16. Previous JHOSCs have waived the requirement for political proportionality. For practical reasons, as there are five local authorities engaged in the JHOSC other Councils have agreed to appoint three Members from each Council and to waive political proportionality. Meetings have commenced on that basis and it is recommended that Central Bedfordshire Council also formally agrees to waive political proportionality. Waiving this requirement will allow all of the Members who requested to take part in the JHOSC to do so.
17. Meetings of the JHOSC are open to the public and dates will be published in the Members' Information Bulletin so that Members can attend if they wish. The JHOSC held its first formal meeting in April and has agreed its terms of reference. The next formal meeting will take place on 12 July and will be held at Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Shefford.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

18. Meetings of the JHOSC have commenced and Council is asked to note the Members that have been appointed whilst also waiving the requirement for political proportionality. Feedback from the JHOSC will be provided to the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC on a regular basis.
19. It is presently envisaged that the JHOSC will operate throughout the duration of the Healthier Together Programme, which will at least initially last until March/April 2013.

**Appendices:**

None

**Background Papers:** (open to public inspection at Priory House, Chicksands)

Item 12: Report to the Social Care, Health and Housing OSC dated 12 December 2011