

By: Paul Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 25 March 2011

Subject: NHS Financial Sustainability: Part 1 - Commissioning

1. Background

- (a) Following the approval of the Forward Work Programme of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 January 2011, this will be the first of three meetings dedicated to the topic of NHS Financial Sustainability. In overarching terms, the intention is to determine answers to the following strategic questions:
1. What are the challenges to ensuring the NHS in Kent is financially sustainable?
 2. Are there any implications for the range and quality of health services available to the people of Kent as a result of any measures being taken to achieve or maintain financial sustainability?
- (b) The focus of this meeting will be on hearing from the Primary Care Trusts. The four main Acute Trusts have been invited to the meeting on 19 April and the intention is to consider mental health services, community health services and ambulance services at the meeting of 10 June.
- (c) The Kent Local Medical Committee have been invited to attend and asked for any information they wished to provide on this topic. The Kent LINK were invited to submit information if they wished. For background information, the questions asked of the Primary Care Trusts in advance of the meeting are contained in the Appendix to this report.
- (d) The Committee has often discussed different ways in which its work can become more outcomes focussed. Due to the depth in which this topic is to be considered by the Committee, one way might be to prepare a number of recommendations over the course of these meetings for submission to the relevant organisations, with their response to be considered at a future meeting.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to agree the following:

1. Members are asked to delegate authority to the Head of Democratic Services in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Group Spokesmen to prepare a list of recommendations to present to a future meeting of the Committee for discussion and agreement prior to their submission to the NHS for a response.
2. To assist this process, Members are asked to suggest recommendations to the Committee Officers following each meeting.

Appendix

(a) Questions to NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent and NHS West Kent:

1. Why is achieving financial balance across the local health economy important and what are the potential consequences of not doing so?
2. What kinds of measures have been taken in 2010/11 in terms of prioritising treatments and changing service provision across Kent in order to try and achieve financial balance?
3. What kinds of measures are being considered for 2011/12?
4. What are the main challenges to achieving financial balance across the health economy?
5. What has been the impact of the NHS Operating Framework for 2011/12 and the PCT allocations for the next financial year?
6. How is the QIPP challenge being met in Kent?
7. What are the particular demographic trends in Kent that will affect NHS commissioning now and in the future, and how does Kent compare on these compared to the rest of the country?