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**By:** Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Corporate Support Services  
& Performance Management  
Meradin Peachey, Director of Public Health

**To:** Corporate Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee,

**Subject:** Update on the NHS White Paper Liberating the NHS

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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**Summary:** KCC responded to the consultation on "Liberating the NHS" which can be found on the committee section of [kent.gov.uk](http://kent.gov.uk) or by following this link

<http://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=3026&Ver=4>

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1. At the 24<sup>th</sup> September meeting POSC Members were advised that the proposals set out in the NHS White Paper "Liberating the NHS" will pave the way for extensive changes in how health services will be commissioned in the future and the role of the County Council in ensuring they meet the needs of the people of Kent.
2. The White Paper also proposes the transfer from PCTs to local government of Public Health functions, i.e. health improvement, health protection and ensuring access to high quality health services in collaboration with a new National Public Health Service.
3. If enacted, the Health Bill will impact on virtually all of the council's services and on how the council works with all its public sector partners. In particular, KCC (and the District Councils) will need to forge new relationships with the GP consortia that will be the new health service commissioners.
4. The size and scale of the proposed changes are not without risk and in anticipation of the Health Bill, arrangements are already in place for Members and officers in KCC to be fully engaged with GP and NHS colleagues in co-designing the future arrangements for Kent. An initial meeting between KCC Members, senior managers and officers and GPs is planned for 25<sup>th</sup> November. The purpose of the meeting is relationship building and to understand the aspirations, concerns and challenges of both parties.
5. The backdrop to these radical changes is the reduction in local authority budgets, the proposed restructuring of KCC (Change to keep succeeding) and the management and efficiency savings imposed upon the local NHS through the Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention programme (QIPP).
6. Key staff and Members are meeting regularly with PCT staff to ensure KCC is part of the transition planning to the new health arrangements.

Firm dates for the publication of the Public Health White Paper and the first reading of the NHS Health Bill are not yet known though both are expected before the end of December.

7. It may be useful for POSC to receive a more detailed update at the 13<sup>th</sup> January meeting.

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