

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Committee	28th September 2005
Report Title	National Health Service - proposed changes
Summary	<p>The Committee to receive details of proposed changes to the National Health Service and responses to the proposals. The following papers are attached:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A copy of a report considered by the County Council on the 20th September 2005.• A copy of a letter from the Strategic Health Authority, dated the 26th August 2005.• A copy each of the responses from the three Warwickshire Primary Care Trusts.• A copy of the County Council's response.
For further information please contact:	<p>Phil Maull Senior Committee Administrator, Tel: 01926 412834 philmaull@warwickshire.gov.uk</p>
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?	No.
Background papers	None

Your ref:
My ref: ACX/EW/jaq



21 September 2005

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Dear Catherine

Commissioning a Patient-Led NHS

On behalf of Warwickshire County Council, I am writing in response to David Nicholson's letter of 26 August 2005. May I express our appreciation for the opportunity to comment at this pre-consultation stage and also to thank you and your colleagues for meeting with members and officers of the County Council last week.

The full County Council met on 20 September 2005, which gave the opportunity for all members to engage in a full and vigorous debate regarding the proposed change in the NHS. It was recognised that these changes are far-reaching and fast moving and have the potential to significantly affect the delivery of health care in the county. The Council's over-riding principle in making this response is to ensure that the health and wellbeing of the people of Warwickshire is promoted and safeguarded and that the potential for partnership is enhanced.

The Council would wish to make the following comments which we hope will be reflected in the SHA's submission to the Department of Health :-

- **Strategic Health Authority**

The Council supports the proposal to consult on the amalgamation of the 3 current SHAs into one serving the West Midlands.

- **Ambulance Trusts**

Warwickshire County Council has concerns about the proposal to replace the current 4 Ambulance Trusts with one covering the West Midlands because of a potential diminishing of the quality of local services provided by the 3 star Coventry and Warwickshire Ambulance Trust. The Council would want to pose a number of questions during the formal consultation period and to urge the consideration of more than one option.

... / ...



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Mrs Catherine Griffiths

- **Primary Care Trust Configuration**

The Council supports the strengthening of PCTs commissioning focus and the following issues should be considered in respect of PCT reconfiguration :

- i) The potential for improvement of health services to the people of Warwickshire and to address health inequalities.
- ii) The identity and recognition of health organisations for the public.
- iii) Coterminal boundaries with the County Council.
- iv) Opportunities for partnership working with a range of agencies.
- v) The ability of the arrangements to support joint commissioning with the local authority (as well as practice-based commissioning). This includes the development of joint posts, pooled budgets and the capacity to play a full part in childrens trust arrangements and emerging adult social care partnerships
- vi) Links to Local Strategic Partnerships.
- vii) Capacity to contribute to and take advantage of Local Area Agreements.
- viii) Equitable and transparent distribution of funding.
- ix) The potential for democratic engagement.

In respect of iii) above the question of coterminosity is not simply about tidiness, but there are significant complications if a PCT spans more than one local authority (including 2 Health O&S Committees). These include complex governance issues regarding pooling of commissioning and resources, decision-making processes and democratic accountability. This is made additionally complex where the two local authorities concerned are a unitary City Council and a shire County with different administrations, considerable demographic differences and potentially differing priorities.

Locality arrangements are an important consideration when reconfiguring PCTs and are vital in ensuring that local needs are met in a sufficiently differentiated way but to consistent standards. Elected members involvement in these local arrangements would be desirable. However, there is a concern that if significant resources are devolved to locality arrangements that these must be dedicated to effective local service delivery rather than management structures which simply create 'mini-PCTs'.

The unanimous view of the Council that emerged from the debate was that the only option supported by the County Council is a Warwickshire PCT with effective locality arrangements that are responsive to community needs.

- **Provider Services (Mental Health/Learning Disability)**

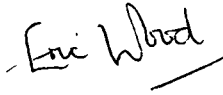
The proposals for services managed and provided by PCTs are referred to in David Nicholson's letter and we are aware of the potential for a Coventry and Warwickshire 'provider' trust being established to deliver mental health, learning disability and substance misuse services. The County Council has misgiving about the bringing together of services to such diverse client groups and would want to understand more about this proposal.

We note that comments are not directly sought on these arrangements at this stage, but we would wish to be actively engaged in future consultations.

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The Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee has developed a thorough understanding of health issues across the County and we envisage it having a key role in scrutinising the whole range of proposals during the formal consultation process.

Yours sincerely



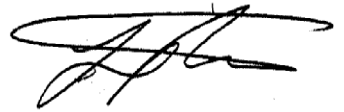
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