

TO: COUNCIL
23 JANUARY 2013

**THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION ON SHAPING THE FUTURE OF
HEALTHCARE IN EAST BERKSHIRE – PROPOSALS FOR HEALTHCARE SERVICES IN
BRACKNELL AND ASCOT**

Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Housing

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the response to the NHS Berkshire Consultation on Shaping the Future of Healthcare in East Berkshire. This is set out as Annexe A. The shorter version of the consultation document is attached as Annexe B for information.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Council approve the response to the consultation in Annexe A to this report.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Council through Executive, Scrutiny and Officers have been seen by the NHS as stakeholders to this consultation and have been asked for a response to the proposals. At the pre-consultation stage during the spring, the Executive Member and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel agreed a joint response. However it is felt that at this stage that the response should be endorsed by the Council as a whole.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Council could choose not to respond.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The NHS embarked on a pre-consultation with key stakeholders on the Future of Healthcare in East Berkshire during the Spring and early Summer of 2012. A joint response on behalf of the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health & Housing and Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel was produced and submitted on behalf of the Council. Whilst current consultation is based on clinical evidence, there is a lack of detailed financial implications in respect of both the proposals being consulted on and the wider Health Economy within which this Council operates. It is a fact that Heatherwood and Wexham Park Trust are in significant financial difficulties and it is not clear how the proposals would help to improve that financial position.
- 5.2 Having undertaken the pre-consultation engagement, the PCT is now proposing: To move the Heatherwood Minor Injuries Unit to the new Urgent Care Centre in Bracknell; Better and more local Rehabilitation Services; Permanently closing the Ascot Birth Centre at Heatherwood Hospital.

- 5.3 The Council in its submission to the pre-consultation questionnaire felt that there were a number of factors beyond the consultation documents which were not fully explained or elaborated on. In particular, the financial climate that surrounds Healthcare within East Berkshire and how far these proposals go towards assuring Bracknell Forest residents that there is affordable, sustainable and high quality healthcare for the Borough's residents. Additionally, it is important to recognise that for many Bracknell Forest residents, Frimley Park Hospital is becoming the acute provider of choice in terms of hospital based healthcare.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 There are no comments arising from this report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The supporting information sets out the Council's concerns regarding the lack of any robust financial assessment of the proposals contained within the consultation.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Consultation organised by NHS Berkshire, the Council was a consultee.

Background Papers

NHS Consultation on proposals for healthcare services in Bracknell and Ascot – Shaping the future of healthcare in East Berkshire – shorter version

NHS Consultation on proposals for healthcare services in Bracknell and Ascot – Shaping the future of healthcare in East Berkshire – detailed version

Contact for further information

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