

# NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

**Report By: Director of Children's Services**

## Wards Affected

County-wide

## Purpose

1. To give further consideration to proposed changes to the configuration of the local health service.

## Financial implications

2. None identified.

## Background

3. The Department of Health published "Commissioning a Patient Led NHS" in July 2005 setting out a framework for improving commissioning of services alongside improvements in health and service delivery. The main factors in the guidance were:
  - Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) of the future will concentrate on commissioning and improving public health
  - PCTs will not directly provide services (this may be allowed only in the most exceptional circumstances)
  - GP practice-based commissioning will be fully developed
  - A reduction in the number of SHAs, Ambulance Trusts and PCTs
  - Most NHS Trusts will become Foundation Trusts
  - An expectation that PCT boundaries will match those of Local Authorities
  - Delivery of at least 15% reduction in management and administrative costs.
4. The Paper directed Strategic Health Authorities to "co-ordinate an exercise locally to ensure we have the right configuration for commissioning."
5. In September 2005 as part of this exercise the Committee received a report on proposed changes to the local health service and endorsed a joint response submitted to the West Midlands South Strategic Health Authority by the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee. A copy of this response is appended.

6. The Strategic Health Authority was required to submit a proposal to the Department of Health in October 2005. Following consideration by that Department a consultation on proposals for the future of the NHS in the West Midlands was launched on 14th December, 2005. The consultation period ends on 22 March, 2006.
7. The proposals affecting local health services to which the Committee needs to direct its attentions are
  - The establishment of new Primary Care Trusts in the West Midlands South SHA area. (It will be noted that the retention of one PCT for Herefordshire is the **preferred** option).
  - Establishment of one West Midlands Wide SHA
  - Establishment of one ambulance trust for the West Midlands.

**Issues**

8. Copies of the relevant consultation documents have previously been circulated to Members of the Committee.
9. Representatives of the Strategic Health Authority have asked for the opportunity to address the Committee on the proposals and will attend the meeting.
10. Representatives of the Herefordshire Primary Care Trust and the Hereford and Worcester NHS Ambulance Trust will be present at the meeting.
11. It is proposed that the Committee should receive the presentations made to it seeking clarification as appropriate, with an additional meeting then being held to determine a response. Cabinet has also been consulted on this proposal on behalf of the Council. Whilst recognising the Committee's independent role it is suggested that, as at the initial stage of this process, it might be most effective if arrangements are made to facilitate a joint response on behalf of this Committee and Cabinet.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the Committee receives the presentation on the consultation documents on proposed changes to the configuration of local health services and an additional meeting is arranged in consultation with Cabinet to determine a response.**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- None