

Meeting of the NHS Northumberland Primary Care Co-Commissioning Committee

Held at 1130 on 1 September 2015, Committee Room 2, County Hall, Morpeth.

Present:

Janet Guy (Chair)
Julie Ross
Christine Keen
Tracey Johnstone

Lay Chair Northumberland CCG Governing Body
Chief Operating Officer
NHS England, Director of Commissioning
NHS England, Head of Primary Care

In attendance:

Steve Brazier
Stephen Young
Fiona Rogerson

Chair of Audit Committee
Strategic Head of Corporate Affairs
Business Support Team

Agenda item 1 - Welcome and questions on agenda items from the public

Janet Guy welcomed all members and noted that there were no members of the public in attendance.

Agenda item 2 – Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Karen Bower.

Agenda item 3.1 – Conflicts of interest and quoracy

Julie Ross informed the committee that Alistair Blair, the CCG's Chief Clinical Officer, is her line manager, this would require the conflicts of interest register to be updated.

Janet Guy declared that her husband is a CQC Inspector, noting he does not inspect any practices within Northumberland.

Steve Brazier highlighted that although an attendee, he should declare that he is the CCG's Audit Chair.

Agenda item 3.2 – Conflicts of interest register

Stephen Young provided Janet Guy with signed copies of the updated conflicts of interest register, it was noted that Julie Ross' submission would be forthcoming. The board noted the revised register.



Resolved – Julie Ross subsequently declared conflicts of interest in this respect. Full committee declarations now held.

Agenda item 4 – Terms of Reference

The inaugural terms of reference were amended following initial discussions and the committee agreed that they now fully reflected the role of the committee.

Resolved – Terms of Reference agreed.

Agenda item 5.1 – Harbottle Surgery Closure – T Johnstone

Tracey Johnstone reported that Harbottle was a small rural practice with 800 patients. In early August the practice was left with just one doctor, and locum cover was not found to be available. The contract holder then gave notice to NHS England that she was no longer able to provide a safe service and the contract was terminated with immediate effect. This action reflected the emergency nature of the situation. The practice closed on 28 August and a dispersal process was started.

Once all patients have been registered at alternative practices, the way ahead concerning Harbottle patient services will be further considered by NHS England. The CCG is confident that patient safety has been of paramount importance throughout the process.

The reactive decision to close the surgery was taken on the grounds of patient safety and not service delivery. Timescales were particularly short and, as this was an emergency closure, there were no alternative contingency arrangements that could have been put in place.

Resolved – Dispersal plan considered appropriate. NHS England and the CCG continue to work with local population.

Agenda item 5.2 Cramlington Medical Group CQC Inspection

The CQC inspected Cramlington Medical Group on 12 May 2015. The practice has since varied its partnership agreement and is in the process of seeking sub contract agreements with Northumberland Primary Care (NPC). Dr Thomas and Dr Thompson are directors of NPC and the new owners. The CQC has noted the new partnership arrangements and on that basis have not put the practice into special measures.

NHS England and the CCG have visited the medical group and will continue to monitor progress. Communication plans have also been considered. The committee have a degree of confidence that the revised partnership arrangements will deliver the required improvements. A proposed briefing for Northumberland County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) was then considered.

Resolved – The committee agreed that all appropriate actions have been taken and approved the OSC submission.



Agenda item 5.3 – Cramlington Medical Group NPC, Sub Contracting Agreement

Cramlington Medical Group has applied to sub contract its clinical services to NPC. NHS England has responded acknowledging the application which, under contract terms, they are able submit. The committee noted that the same process had already been completed with 2 other practices in Northumberland.

The committee questioned part 5a of the PMS regulations (paragraph 69 of Schedule 5 (part 4) for this application, in particular attempting to clarify the position of the partners as directors of the NPC board. Tracey Johnstone informed the committee that NHS England had taken legal advice about the provisions of paragraph 69 generally but not with reference to the specific circumstances of this application. It was agreed that parts 5b and c require further clarification in relation to both pecuniary interests and conflict of interests of the partners, because the partners at Cramlington Medical Group are also directors of NPC.

Janet Guy stated that the committee does not have the legal expertise to make a decision on these issues and therefore suggested that further legal advice should be sought on the specific circumstances of this application.

Action 5.3.1 – Tracey Johnstone to ascertain the legal position.

Julie Ross read out the questions provided by Karen Bower; the committee agreed that they all had been answered during the discussion.

Agenda item 6.1 Primary Care at Scale

Julie Ross provided a brief synopsis of the Primary Care at Scale model proposed for Northumberland and stated that the Integration Testing Panel will consider the model in September.

Tracey Johnstone confirmed with the committee that there are pockets of the model already in operation in the region although not on the scale that Northumberland is considering. She further highlighted that Gateshead were currently piloting care home visiting and central triage packages.

Action 6.1.1 Tracey Johnstone to provide Gateshead pilot feedback to the next committee.

Agenda item 7 Any other business

There were no items of other business to note.

Agenda item 8 Date and time of next meeting

21 October 2015 date to be confirmed. – Christine Keen noted her absence from 8 to 24 October.

