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## **Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)**

**Report of the meeting held on 7th December 2010**

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### **Matters for Information**

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#### **41. CAR PARKING AT HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL**

Pursuant to Item No 19 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 29th September 2010, the Panel has received a presentation from the Facilities Business Manager at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital reviewing the revised car parking pricing structure at the Hospital since it came into effect on 1st July 2009.

Background information on the parking provision available at the Hospital site has been received. Parking charges had been revised during 2010 following concerns that the previous fee structure was not appropriate for the needs of patients and visitors, particularly as the three pricing bands lacked flexibility. The absence of a comprehensive scheme of concessionary rates for long-term patients and their visitors and the provision of only a limited amount of short-term and disabled parking spaces added to the need for the fee structure to be revised.

Since the implementation of the revised pricing structure, the Hospital has considered a number of further improvements to its parking arrangements including the installation of new car park machines with credit card readers, improved signage, a review of staff and public spaces, improved short-term facilities and an enhanced concessionary rates scheme. As a result the Hospital is proposing to introduce new rates with effect from 1st January 2011 as follows:-

- ◆ Up to 2 hours - £2.50
- ◆ Up to 4 hours - £4.00
- ◆ Up to 24 hours - £6.00

The Panel has received an explanation of the rationale behind the proposed charges, which have been modelled around average times for visits to clinics, visiting hours and concessionary rates. The Panel has questioned the need for the proposed 4 hour rate and has been informed that this will apply to those visiting the Hospital who do not qualify for concessionary rates, including those travelling from outside the local area. Without this charge, such visitors would be liable to pay the 24 hour rate.

Members have queried a number of aspects of the proposals including the principle of charging for parking at hospitals, the pricing structure at Addenbrookes Hospital, the level of income generated from the car park compared with the revenue costs associated with maintaining and administering the facility and contribution made towards running the Hospital's services, the possibility of charging blue badge permit holders and the potential for the franchisee that takes over its management to use parking fees to raise additional income for the Hospital. Other matters discussed include staff and commuter parking on site.

Having noted that a comprehensive Communications Plan has been developed through which the proposals will be discussed including consultation with patients liaison groups, staff briefings and use of the internet and intranet, the Panel has expressed support for the proposals.

#### **42. STUDY: CONSULTATION PROCESS**

Pursuant to Item No 16 of their Report to the meeting of the Council held on 29th September 2010, the Panel has given further consideration to its study on the Council's consultation processes. Members have discussed a number of matters including the timing of consultations, interpretation of data at Ward level together with the potential implications of this for statistical reliability, the role of Councillors in communicating with their constituents on consultations, the information provided to the public before and after consultations including the reasons why a chosen course of action has been taken following a consultation exercise and utilisation of the internal consultation calendar and database resource.

The Panel has discussed the validity of the methods employed by the Council to undertake the recent budget consultation exercise. Having noted that the questionnaire surveys had been used to augment qualitative research, it has been confirmed that the decisions that have subsequently been made by the Council are reflective of the public consultation responses.

The Panel has appointed a Working Group to pursue the investigation further. The Working Group will review the Council's guidance on consultation methodology and evaluate examples of previous consultations.

#### **43. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

In conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Environmental Well-Being and for Economic Well-Being, the Panel for Social Well-Being has reviewed the Council's performance against its priority objectives, which are contained in "Growing Success" - the Corporate Plan. The Panel has endorsed the views of the Corporate Plan Working Group, particularly with regard to the objectives where targets have not been achieved.

Members have questioned the process through which targets have been set in respect of the number of admissions to the Leisure Centres. The Panel has noted that the target figure took into account the receipt of external funding, which subsequently has not been awarded to the Council. In order that underlying trends can be monitored, changes in admissions/participants attributable to such developments will in future be reported separately.

**44. HUNTINGDONSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP VIEWS ON CCTV**

The Panel has been acquainted with the views of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership on the value of CCTV in the District. The report had been requested to enable Members to ascertain the likely effect of the Council's budget plans in respect of CCTV.

The Partnership has indicated that there are no immediate concerns about the anticipated service reductions in 2011/12 but that it would be preferable to maintain the basic service thereafter. It is intended that the Partnership will undertake an impact assessment on the proposals next year and investigate alternative methods of maintaining CCTV surveillance in Huntingdonshire.

Members of the Panel have commented on the likely increase in crime levels if the CCTV service ceases. The Panel has requested that the views of the Police on the proposals including those of front line Police Officers form part of the Partnership's impact assessment. The Executive Councillor for Operational and Countryside Services has advised the Panel that efforts are being made to preserve the service through alternative mechanisms.

The Panel's comments will be submitted to the Partnership at its next meeting in December. A report back from the Partnership will be submitted to the Panel's meeting in January 2011.

**45. CONSULTATION: EAST OF ENGLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST**

The Panel has been acquainted with details of a consultation exercise being undertaken by the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust on its plans to become an NHS Foundation Trust. The consultation seeks views on the proposals, which are designed to give local people a greater say on the Ambulance Service and how it develops in the future.

The Panel has queried a number of matters raised within the consultation document. In particular, clarification has been sought on the Ambulance Service's relationship with MAGPAS and how the service it currently provides will be maintained.

A full response to the consultation will be submitted to the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust before the closing date of 31st December 2010.

**46. REPORT OF THE CABINET**

The Panel has been acquainted with the outcome of the Cabinet's deliberations in response to its reports on the Cambridgeshire Local Investment Plan and the Homelessness Strategy.

**47. CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULTS WELL-BEING AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Panel has received an update on matters currently being considered by the Cambridgeshire Adults, Well-Being and Health Scrutiny Committee including the Older Peoples Mental Health Service in Huntingdonshire and Fenland, a Member led review of access to services and support for people with dementia and their carers, rehabilitation services in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, scrutiny of the adult support services integrated plan and day care services in Cambridgeshire.

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**Other Matters of Interest**

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**48. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS**

The Panel has reviewed its programme of studies. It has been noted that, subject to approval from the Department of Health and other regulators, Circle has been appointed to take over the management of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital with effect from 1st June 2011. The Panel will extend an invitation to Circle to attend a Panel meeting in June/July 2011 to discuss their plans for the Hospital.

The Panel will be undertaking work on the voluntary sector and on the Council's Customer Service Centres at future meetings. This work is intended to inform the Council's future decisions on the budget.

**49. WORK PLAN STUDIES**

The Panel has reviewed its work plan and received details of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

**50. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 – FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel has been acquainted with details of the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

**51. SCRUTINY**

The Panel has considered the latest edition of the Decision Digest and discussed matters contained therein.

S J Criswell  
Chairman