

Council Motion relating to the Redevelopment of the Royal Berkshire Hospital

Committee considering report:	Health Scrutiny Committee
Date of Committee:	23 May 2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Graham Bridgman
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	10 May 2022
Report Author:	Gordon Oliver
Forward Plan Ref:	OSMC

1 Purpose of the Report

To consider the motion submitted in the name of Councillor Alan Macro at the Council meeting on 17 March 2022, namely:

“Council notes that:

- The Royal Berkshire Hospital Foundation Trust has been consulting on various options to re-develop the hospital. Several options involve various levels of redevelopment of the existing site and one option the building of a new hospital on a new site.*
- The existing site is very cramped and contains a mixture of new, old and very old buildings, some of which are pre-fabricated. Many have very poor insulation leading to uncomfortable conditions for patients in hot or cold weather and also to poor energy efficiency.*
- Re-development of the existing site is difficult because of its cramped and dense layout.*
- It is very difficult for residents of some parts of West Berkshire to reach the hospital using public transport.*
- Car parking in and around the hospital is restricted and expensive.*
- It can be time consuming to travel to the hospital by any means, including ambulance, at peak times.*

Council therefore resolves that its preferred option is the building of a new hospital on a new site.”

2 Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- (a) The motion is rejected on the basis that, where a responsible person consults more than one local authority, those local authorities have a statutory duty under the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 to appoint a joint overview and scrutiny committee for the purposes of the consultation, and only that joint overview and scrutiny committee (JHOSC) may (so far as those local authorities are concerned):

- make comments on the proposal consulted on;
- require the provision of information about the proposal; or
- require a member or employee of a responsible person to attend before it to answer questions in connection with the consultation.

(The redevelopment of the Royal Berkshire Hospital would affect patient flows from several different local authorities and so the above duty would apply.)

- (b) The Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust be asked to provide patient flow data to identify which local authorities are likely to be affected by the development proposal. This data would inform the composition of the JHOSC which may be different to the JHOSC that has been set up to scrutinise the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System.
- (c) Monitoring Officers of the affected local authorities be asked to start putting arrangements in place in preparation for when a JHOSC is required.
- (d) The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust be encouraged to call for a JHOSC to be set up sooner rather than later to allow local authority Scrutiny Members to have an input to the development of the Outline Business Case and selection of the Preferred Option for the development of the new hospital.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
Human Resource:	There are no HR implications arising from this report.
Legal:	The recommendation is consistent with relevant legislation including The Health and Care Act 2012 and The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013

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Risk Management:	Implementing the report's recommendation would minimise the risk of legal challenge.			
Property:	There are no Property implications arising from this report.			
Policy:	The recommendation is consistent with the approach of cross-boundary working on health and wellbeing issues as set out in the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2030			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		There are no equality impacts arising directly from this report.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		There are no impacts for people with protected characteristics arising directly from this report.
Environmental Impact:		X		There are no environmental impacts arising directly from this report.
Health Impact:	X			The recommendation will ensure that the health and wellbeing needs of all patients of the Royal Berkshire Hospital are considered.
ICT Impact:		X		There are no ICT impacts arising directly from this report.

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Digital Services Impact:		X		There are no Digital Services impacts arising directly from this report.
Council Strategy Priorities:	X			The recommendation will support the priority 'Support everyone to reach their full potential' and in particular 'Improve the health and wellbeing of our residents'.
Core Business:	X			The recommendation supports the following core business areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the wellbeing of older people and vulnerable adults
Data Impact:		X		Not applicable
Consultation and Engagement:				

4 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 4.1 On 17 March 2022, Councillor Alan Macro tabled a motion to Council, which highlighted that the Royal Berkshire Hospital Trust had consulted on various options to re-develop its main hospital site. Options set out in the Strategic Outline Business Case included various levels of redevelopment of the existing hospital site in central Reading, with the final option being the building of a new hospital on a new site.
- 4.2 Councillor Macro highlighted a number of weaknesses with the existing hospital, including: the cramped nature of the site; a mix of older and prefabricated buildings with poor insulation; a lack of parking; difficulties residents face when travelling to the hospital; and challenges facing ambulances in getting to the site due to traffic conditions. The motion proposed that Council should resolve that its preferred option is the building of a new hospital on a new site.

Background

- 4.3 The Department of Health & Social Care set out in its Health Infrastructure Plan (HIP), funding for 40 new hospital building projects over the next 10 years. The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust was chosen as one of the NHS Trusts to receive seed funding to prepare a Strategic Outline Case for the future development of a new hospital. This could be a completely new hospital, or a combination of new building and refurbishment. It could be on the present hospital site in Reading or on a new site elsewhere.

- 4.4 The Strategic Outline Business case identified four options as main redevelopment possibilities along with two further scenarios – the so-called ‘Do Nothing’ and ‘Do Minimum’ options – which were included simply as baseline options against which the other options could be compared. Three of the four core options involved various levels of redevelopment of the existing hospital site, while the final option involved building a completely new hospital on a greenfield site, which has not yet been identified.
- 4.5 The Trust is now seeking permission from the Department of Health and Social Care, and HM Treasury, to proceed to conduct further work on three options – two of which would involve redevelopment of the existing site and the new-build option on a Greenfield site. This will involve development of a more detailed Outline Business Case.
- 4.6 It is understood that the HIP programme is currently on hold pending the outcome of discussions between the NHS and the Treasury over funding. However, the Trust is continuing with its programme of public engagement pending an announcement from Government.

Legislation

- 4.7 The role of the Health Scrutiny Committee (HSC) is to undertake scrutiny of the planning, development and operation of Public Health and NHS services for citizens of West Berkshire, in accordance with the National Health Service Act 2006 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012) and the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.
- 4.8 Its functions include considering and responding to consultations by relevant NHS bodies or health service providers, on proposals that both parties agree constitute a substantial development or substantial variation in the provision of health services for citizens of West Berkshire.
- 4.9 The legislation stipulates that where a ‘responsible person’ (i.e. a body involved in the commissioning or provision of health services) consults more than one local authority, those local authorities have a statutory duty to appoint a joint overview and scrutiny committee (JHOSC) for the purposes of the consultation, and only that JHOSC may (so far as those local authorities are concerned):
 - (a) make comments on the proposal consulted on;
 - (b) require the provision of information about the proposal; or
 - (c) require a member or employee of a responsible person to attend before it to answer questions in connection with the consultation.
- 4.10 The redevelopment of the Royal Berkshire Hospital would affect patient flows from several different local authorities and so the above duty would apply. However, the point at which this would be triggered is open to interpretation. Some health bodies will call for a JHOSC to be set up at the outset, while others will only trigger the process once a preferred option has been developed. The former scenario is preferable for local authorities, since they have the opportunity to be involved in developing the options and shaping the consultation process rather than being presented with a fait accompli where there is little scope to influence the final proposal.

Proposals

4.11 It is proposed that the motion as put by Councillor Macro be rejected on the basis that legislation requires the matter to be considered by a JHOSC.

4.12 It is also proposed that:

- The Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust be asked to provide patient flow data to identify which local authorities are likely to be affected by the development proposal.
- Monitoring Officers of the affected local authorities be asked to start putting arrangements in place in preparation for when a JHOSC is required.
- The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust be encouraged to call for a JHOSC to be set up sooner rather than later to allow local authority Scrutiny Members to have an input to the development of the Outline Business Case and selection of the Preferred Option for the development of the new hospital.

5 Other options considered

The Council could opt to do nothing at this stage and to wait for the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust to call for a JHOSC. However, this could result in a significant delay while the various local authorities make arrangements to delegate scrutiny powers on this matter to a new JHOSC and allocate Members to the committee. Also, there is a risk that local authorities would only be consulted once a preferred option had been identified.

6 Conclusion

The proposals set out in this report would ensure that the legislative requirements are satisfied, while giving affected local authorities the chance to influence the preparation of the Outline Business Case for the redeveloped Royal Berkshire Hospitals and thus ensure that the needs of local communities are fully taken into account.

7 Appendices

Motion submitted to Council on 17 March 2022

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

Wards affected: All wards

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