

AT A MEETING

- of the -

SPECIAL TIME LIMITED

HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL held at
the Council House, Walsall on

Friday 16 September 2005 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor Arif (Chairman)
Councillor Robertson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Bird
Councillor Clarke
Councillor Walker
Councillor Wilkes
Councillor Woodruff

21.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for non attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillor D. Pitt and Councillor Robinson.

22.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

Councillor Woodruff declared a personal interest as an employee of the hospital trust

23.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 31 AUGUST 2005

24. RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 31 August 2005, a copy having been previously circulated to each member of the panel be approved and signed by chair as a correct record subject to the following amendment: -

- Page 7 paragraph 8 – delete figure £30,000.000 and substitute the following “30 thousand pounds per hour”.
- Page 7 paragraph 4 – should also read “30 thousand pounds per hour”.

25.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT, 1985

26. RESOLVED

That there were no items to be considered in the private session at this meeting.

JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

The report of the Executive Director was submitted: -

(see annexed)

Dave Martin Executive Director advised members of the background to the report before them which set out the current position.

Members noted that the Black Country Review Implementation Board had confirmed that no decision had yet been made in respect of the proposals. No options had yet been put forward by the board and they did not expect to be in a position to confirm the arrangements before their next meeting due to take place during the second week of October. Following the boards decision on the proposals to be consulted on, the proposals will be put before each affected Authority's Hospital Trust and PCT for their approval prior to publication.

It was clear therefore that this panel would not be a position to make a definitive judgement or take any formal action towards the decision of the substantiality of any proposals which have been reported to date.

David reminded members that at the last meeting the panel had agreed that officers from Walsall, Wolverhampton and Dudley should meet to discuss arrangements relating to the establishment of a joint scrutiny panel. He confirmed that officers had met and had made a number of suggestions as set out in the appendices attached to the report now submitted. The first suggestion was in the form of a guide to assess the impact of the proposed variation for the residents of the local population which might be effected by any proposals published. The next attachment related to the suggested terms of reference for a joint scrutiny panel.

Members noted the impact assessment tool has being useful for Local Authorities who might have a low involvement because of the minor effect any proposals might have on their population.

In considering the draft terms of reference members expressed concern about the proposed number of members from each authority if the political proportionality method is adopted.

Members were of the view that due to the political makeup of the council in Wolverhampton and Dudley the political makeup of the joint scrutiny panel would be predominantly Labour members. Members were of the view that a joint scrutiny panel should be evenly balanced by political parties and consideration should be given to this suggestion.

Consideration was also given to the chairmanship of the panel and members felt that whilst consideration could be given to the position of chair being taken by one of the two lead Local Authorities, other possibilities should be considered, such as, the chair of the panel alternating.

A further suggestion was that the chairman of the joint panel could be a member from an Authority who will be affected to a lesser degree by the proposals.

Members noted the draft terms of reference and agreed that officers should continue to develop the document taking into account the comments made at this meeting. At the next meeting of this panel members should be in a position to formulate a decision about the substantiality of any proposals providing the detailed proposals are forthcoming from the Black Country Review Implementation Board including details of the consultation process.

The aim at the next meeting will be to prepare a report for submission to council seeking council's:

- a) Approval for the establishment of a joint scrutiny panel.
- b) Nominations from this authority to joint scrutiny panel.
- c) Approval of the terms of reference for the joint scrutiny panel.

28. RESOLVED

- a) That the report be received and noted.
- b) That the draft terms of reference be noted and officers be requested to continue working on the terms of reference taking into account the proposals put forward at this meeting.
- c) That a further report be prepared for submission to the next meeting of this panel with a view to recommendations being put forward to council on 7th November, incorporating this panel's recommendations in respect of the substantiality of the proposals, the robustness of the consultation process and the establishment of a joint scrutiny panel.
- d) That the next meeting of this panel be held on Monday 31 October 2005 at 6.00 p.m.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

There being no further business this meeting terminated at 6.50 p.m.