

Council – 9th July 2012

Notice of motion – Walsall Manor Hospital Foundation Trust Status

The following notice of motion has been received from Councillor Smith:

This Council calls on the Council's Health Scrutiny Panel to organise and host a Borough wide Public meeting to allow for a balanced public debate on whether or not the Walsall Manor Hospital should seek and be granted Foundation Status, with opportunities for members of the public present to make contributions, ask questions and to democratically deliberate on the issue at the Public meeting though it is accepted that any decision would have no legally binding effect one way or the other.

Background information

The process of achieving Foundation Trust status is prescribed by the Department of Health and was originally published in 2008 with some amendments at July 2010. It is available on the DH website. A comprehensive programme of consultation is required. Consultation by Walsall Healthcare Trust started on 15th February 2012 and ran until 14th May 2012. During this period WHT used a variety of methods to engage local people, patients, staff and stakeholder organisations, including:

- Attending established meetings, both internal and external to the organisation. (44 external meetings, comprising 632 attendees and including 10 open public meetings (one afternoon and one evening) in each of the 5 proposed constituency areas. These were advertised in the Trust building, on the internet, Facebook and twitter media and in the local papers a number of times
- The full consultation document and an online questionnaire was made available on the website;
- Printed and distributed a summary consultation document and membership application forms;
- Attended Walsall Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel on three occasions to consult on the plan for consultation, the draft document and explore the implications of the proposals;
- Attended 65 established staff meetings and 44 external meetings (including our ten public meetings) – meaning that we reached a total of 1,490 people face to face;
- Video Podcasts from the Chief Executive talking about how becoming a Foundation Trust will help WHT to achieve the vision and giving details about public meetings, as well as signposting people to where they could find more information on the Foundation Trust application;
- Distributing over 27,000 flyers and 500 posters to GP practices, churches, mosques and temples, libraries, health centres, leisure centres, community support groups, advice groups and Sure Start centres. These gave details of public meeting dates, times and venues and signposted people to where they could find more information on the Foundation Trust application;

- A dedicated Facebook page and use of Twitter to push out regular messages about, for example, the launch of the consultation, the numbers of people had met face-to-face, public meetings, etc.
- Extensive use of PR to tell people about the consultation, sending out press releases on a weekly basis and placing adverts in the local press.
- Attending two temples and a mosque in the local community to talk to them about the consultation.

The Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel has taken an active interest in the Walsall Healthcare NHS Trusts (WHT) proposal to become a Foundation Trust. On 24 October 2011 WHT attended a Panel meeting and informed Members of their consultation strategy. At this meeting the Panel resolved for the Trust to formally consult with young people.

Members then considered a draft of WHTs Foundation Trust consultation document on 24 January 2012.

The Panel were formally consulted on 24 April 2012. At the meeting Members received a copy of the final consultation document and were informed of:

- WHT's vision and priorities;
- WHT's promises to patients;
- WHT's promises to colleagues;
- What an FT was;
- FT Members and Governors;
- FT public and staff constituencies;
- The role of the FT Council of Governors and its relationship with the Board of Directors;
- Next steps in the FT application process.

At the close of the item Members resolved to support the Foundation Trust status application.'

Government policy is for all NHS providers to achieve Foundation Trust status by April 2014. Where a current NHS Trust is not able to achieve Foundation Trust status then the running of its services will be taken over by another NHS Trust that has achieved Foundation Trust status

Andy Rust
Head of Joint Commissioning

29th June 2012