

## CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**14 MAY 2009**

**REPORT OF HEALTH  
SELECT COMMITTEE**

### **CABINET DECISION**

**Adult Services and Health** – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Ann McCoy  
**Children and Young People** – Lead Cabinet Members – Councillor Alex Cunningham

#### **SCRUTINY REVIEW OF AUDIOLOGY**

1. Summary

This report presents the findings of the Health Select Committee following a review of audiology services for Stockton residents. The review examined access to services, care pathways and waiting times as well as feedback from users of the service.

2. Recommendations

1 That the Tees PCTs be congratulated on implementing measures to significantly reduce waiting times.

2 That the provision of more localised services in community settings be supported and this be considered as part of the Momentum proposals and through opportunities for the co-location of services with other providers.

3 That the commissioning of private sector providers with a High Street presence (such as that provided via the Specsavers pilot) be supported to reduce pressure on the more specialised services provided elsewhere and improve access to services, subject to clear information and reassurances being provided to patients that the NHS service is free of charge from any commissioned provider.

4 That the Tees PCTs review the care pathway for children's screening, taking into account the different models operating across the Tees PCTs to seek to achieve best practice.

5 That the Tees PCTs review demand for audiology services provided at UHNT (in particular the drop-in clinics) and investigate ways of reducing the pressure on services at UHNT if necessary.

6 The Tees PCTs review the care pathway to provide an improved ear wax removal service at the point of referral from the GP to the audiology dept.

7 That both visual and audio calling devices are operated in all audiology reception areas.

### 3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

The topic was identified at a meeting of the Scrutiny Liaison Forum in March 2008, and subsequently incorporated into the scrutiny work programme by the Executive Scrutiny Committee in April 2008. The review enabled the Select Committee to review progress in reducing waiting times for audiology services and identify improvements audiology services for Stockton Borough residents.

### 4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

**Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.**

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**14 MAY 2009**

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SELECT COMMITTEE**

**CABINET DECISION**

**AUDIOLOGY**

**SUMMARY**

This report presents the findings of the Health Select Committee following a review of audiology.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1 That the Tees PCTs be congratulated on implementing measures to significantly reduce waiting times.
- 2 That the provision of more localised services in community settings be supported and this be considered as part of the Momentum proposals and through opportunities for the co-location of services with other providers.
- 3 That the commissioning of private sector providers with a High Street presence (such as that provided via the Specsavers pilot) be supported to reduce pressure on the more specialised services provided elsewhere and improve access to services, subject to clear information and reassurances being provided to patients that the NHS service is free of charge from any commissioned provider.
- 4 That the Tees PCTs review the care pathway for children's screening, taking into account the different models operating across the Tees PCTs to seek to achieve best practice.
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- 7 That both visual and audio calling devices are operated in all audiology reception areas.

**DETAIL**

1. The attached report presents Cabinet with the findings of the review of Audiology undertaken by Members of the Health Select Committee. The review examined access to services, care pathways and waiting times as well as feedback from users of the service.
2. Following consideration by Cabinet and the Tees PCTs, an action plan will be submitted to the Select Committee setting out how approved recommendations will be implemented detailing responsibility for action and timescales.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3. There are no financial implications for the Council arising from the review.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

4. There are no specific legal implications arising from the review.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

5. The review of Audiology is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

6. This report and the issues contained within have relevance mainly to Key Improvement Priorities: Improved Health and Emotional Well Being and Improved Quality of Life.

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7. When an Equality Impact Assessment is carried out, it will need to consider the suggested recommendations.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

8. The Committee received evidence from users through:
  - Viewpoint Focus Groups
  - Posters at Audiology Departments
  - Email to RNID members in the Stockton area
  - Mail out to PIC Network
  - Mail out to Disability Advisory Group
  - Mail out to residents registered with the sensory loss team
  - Message of the Day within Stockton Council
9. A link officer from the Tees PCTs was assigned to the Committee for the duration of the review and the Corporate Director and relevant Cabinet Members were consulted on the scope of the review and the findings and recommendations.

### **Committee Membership:**

Councillor Mrs Ann Cains (Chair)  
Councillor Kevin Faulks (Vice Chair)

Councillor Paul Baker  
Councillor Julia Cherrett  
Councillor Mrs Liz Nesbitt  
Councillor Mrs Sylvia Walmsley  
Councillor Jim Beall  
Councillor Cockerill  
Councillor Andrew Sherris

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Background Papers None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: Not ward specific

Property None