
PETITION REFERRED TO THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL BY COUNCIL – PROPOSED CHANGES TO EMERGENCY SERVICES AT QUEEN ELIZABETH, QUEEN MOTHER (QEQM) HOSPITAL, MARGATE, ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

To: **Overview & Scrutiny Panel – 14 January 2014**

Main Portfolio Area: Community Services

By: **Charles Hungwe, Senior Democratic Services Officer**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Wards: **All**

Summary: **A Petition to the Council has been received in relation to proposed changes to emergency services at the QEQM Hospital, Margate Accident & Emergency Department.**

For decision

1.0 Introduction and background information

- 1.1 Under the Council's petitions scheme, if a petition contains more than 1000 signatures, the petition organiser will be offered five minutes to present the petition at a meeting of Council; and, at the meeting at which presentation of the petition takes place, Council will debate the petition and decide how to respond.
- 1.2 The petitions scheme also states that the total time devoted to the consideration of petitions at any single Council meeting will not exceed 30 minutes.

2.0 Current Situation

- 2.1 A petition containing 1,989 valid signatures has been received from Mrs Betty Renz, stating:

"We the undersigned protest against changes to emergency services at QEQM A&E department".

- 2.2 Mrs Renz, as the petition originator, presented the petition to Full Council on 5 December 2013.
- 2.3 As the petition had more than 1,000 signatures; Council debated the petition and then referred it to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel.
- 2.4 For reference Members are asked to note that on the 14th November 2013 Cabinet received a report from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to provide an update regarding the scrutiny review work in relation to the proposed Clinical Strategy by the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (EKHUFT).

- 2.5 It was agreed by Cabinet Members to defer making a final decision on the matter until after the Overview & Scrutiny Panel has made recommendations to Cabinet regarding the public consultation by the EKHUFT Board on the proposed Clinical Strategy for East Kent. The cabinet report is attached at Annex 1 for information.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 The Panel may opt to assign an officer to verify with the EKHUFT Board the concerns of the petitioners regarding what is perceived as “proposed changes to emergency services at the QEQM Hospital, Margate Accident & Emergency Department” and produce a report with recommendations for the Panel to consider.
- 3.2 An Overview & Scrutiny Panel update report was considered and an interim decision agreed by Cabinet on 14 November 2013 as reported above in paragraph 2.5. If the Panel is of the view that the petition is similar in nature to the issue that was considered by Cabinet in November, then Members could elect to await the commencement of the public consultation on the new clinical strategy for East Kent which is being proposed by the EKHUFT Board and then recommend Council’s response to this consultation.
- 3.3 Members may wish to consider reconstituting the East Kent Hospitals Clinical Strategy Review TFG to look specifically into the single issue on what is perceived to be “proposed changes to emergency services at the QEQM Hospital, Margate Accident & Emergency Department” and report back to the Panel.

4.0 Corporate Implications

4.1 Financial

- 4.1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4.2 Legal

- 4.2.1 Under the terms of the Council’s Petitions Scheme, a petition of this size must be debated at the meeting of Council at which it is presented. After debating the petition Council referred it to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel for further review.

4.3 Corporate

- 4.3.1 None arising directly from this report

4.4 Equity and Equalities

- 4.4.1 None arising directly from this report.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 That Members agree the best course of action taking into consideration the options in section 3.0 of the report and when appropriate, report back to Full Council.

6.0 Decision Making Process

- 6.1 Under the Council’s petitions scheme, Council is required to debate the petition and decide on a course of action to be taken in relation to it. Where a petition has been referred to a body of Council, a report ought to be brought back to Council advising Members on the action undertaken to address issues of concern raised in the petition.

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Annex List

Annex 1	Report to Council, 5 December 2013
Annex 2	Report to Cabinet, 14 November 2013

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager and Deputy S. 151 Officer
Legal	Harvey Patterson, Corporate & Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

KEY

*TFG – Task & Finish Group

*QEQM Hospital – Queen Elizabeth Queen Mother Hospital

*EKHUFT Board – East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust Board