

SCRUTINY COMMISSION FOR HEALTH ISSUES	Agenda Item No.7(ii)
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Report of the Stephen Graves, Chief Executive Officer, Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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PETERBOROUGH AND STAMFORD HOSPITALS – PATHOLOGY SERVICES

1. PURPOSE

1.1 In response to a request for information by the Scrutiny Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee to note the content of this briefing on pathology services.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

3.1 N/A

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 N/A

5. KEY ISSUES

5.1 The Trust provides pathology services to the local population. The two primary sources of activity are tests that are requested by GPs and those that are requested by hospital staff.

5.2 The latter is funded as part of a hospital visit, whether outpatient, day case or inpatient. The former is funded through a contract with the CCGs and amounts to about £5.8m.

5.3 In 2011, the then Strategic Health Authority led a competitive procurement process on behalf of commissioners and GPs across the whole of the East of England for the GP workload. This followed a national report on pathology by Lord Carter of Coles, which identified savings across the NHS.

5.4 The contracts let across the East of England were normally for 5 years with an extension of 2 years. This Trust was successful in keeping the work locally, in all other parts of the East of England a consortium of providers won the work.

5.5 GP pathology is capable of being transported around the country; and the UK system of it being carried out in the local hospital is not replicated in the majority of the western world. The norm is for pathology services to be transported, including by air, to a large centre with the results sent electronically to the requesting clinician. The consequence is that such a service is provided at scale and extra marginal activity is very cost effective.

5.6 Therefore the NHS is in a process of consolidation with centralised pathology services and all around us are partnerships of NHS providers, with and without private sector partners delivering the service.

5.7 Trusts therefore need to consider the clinical sustainability and affordability of their service, if

and when there is another contracting round, as GP workload is often half the total number of tests that a pathology laboratory undertakes. It is against this position that this Trust is considering its options.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 N/A

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 N/A

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1 N/A

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

9.1 None.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 None.