

Councillor Dee Simson
Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chair

15 October 2015

Dear Chair,

Scrutiny Panel on Primary Care Services in Brighton & Hove

I submit my request for a scrutiny review into the current situation with regard to the provision of Primary Care Services in the City and for that Scrutiny Panel to be tasked with calling NHS England (NHSE) and others to report on the matter.

Following the closure of Goodwood Court Medical Centre GP practice and NHSE's presentation to OSC on 22nd July 2015, I requested NHSE report on the actual closure risk status of every GP practice in the City (currently 46 on 52 sites) and the contingency planning should any fail. I repeated that request at the 9th September 2015 OSC.

It was agreed that NHSE would report to a joint OS and Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) Committee. During the intervening period, Officers have attempted to arrange for NHSE to attend Committee but as yet, NHSE have failed to accommodate all reasonable requests.

NHSE will be presenting a report to HWB on 20th October 2015 titled "Strengthening Primary Care Services in Brighton and Hove". The report contents page includes "Other vulnerable practices in the City and ongoing action". The report merely discusses the events at Eaton Place, Goodwood Court, Burwash Road and Willow House. It further summaries in table form the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) assessment of six additional practices.

NHSE state in the report "there have been two...closures...for...reasons....outside the control of NHSE". This "HWB report" fails to address both the concerns that I raised or answer the questions posed.

I believe that a Scrutiny Panel is now the only effective resource open to the Council to ensure that appropriate representatives from NHSE are called to account and that both the OSC and HWB can then be reassured that all partner organisations are addressing the issue in a holistic and joined up manner, understand all the closure risks and have appropriate contingency plans in place.

I acknowledge that the Panel will determine its Terms of Reference but to assist your consideration of this request, I suggest the following:-

1. Establishes through testimony of any Party or person as it sees fit, the current risk of failure of **all** GP practices in the City of Brighton and Hove and the contingency plans in place to protect the interests of patients.

2. Produces a report for submission to the HWB or Full Council (subject to findings) with recommendations for the necessary actions to be instigated to mitigate such risks or lack of contingency planning as it may consider.

Thank you for considering this request that I believe should be treated with all urgency.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Lee Wares