

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Title of Report: **Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny
Committee – Healthcare for London**

Date: **24 October 2007**

Summary of this Report

This report proposes that the General Purposes Committee recommends to the full Council that Westminster joins a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to deal with one issue, formulating a response to recommendations made by the NHS about the future of healthcare in London.

Recommendation

That the General Purposes Committee recommends to the full Council that it agrees:

1. To establish a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee ('the joint committee') of London boroughs to respond to the NHS London's consultation on the models of care outlined in 'Healthcare for London: A Framework for Action' provided the Joint Scrutiny Network (a body of which the Council is a member) so agrees
2. To authorise the Director of Legal and Administrative Services to agree the terms of reference of the joint committee, in consultation with the Council's nominated member of the joint committee.
3. To appoint a member to JHOSC as nominated by the Chief Whip and appointed by the Director of Legal and Administrative Services in accordance with his existing delegated authority.



City of Westminster

General Purposes Committee Report

Item No:	
Date:	24 October 2007
Classification:	For General Release
Title of Report:	Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Healthcare for London
Report of:	Director of Legal and Administrative Services
Wards involved:	None
Policy context:	Management of the Council
Financial summary:	No financial implications arising from this report
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3. Background

Duties of Health Scrutiny:

- 3.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 requires the local authority to ensure its overview and scrutiny committee has the power to review and scrutinise matters relating to the health service in its area and to make reports and recommendations on such matters. That function is carried out at Westminster by the Health and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 The Local Authority (Overview and Scrutiny Committees Health Scrutiny Functions) Regulations 2002 gives the authority the option of establishing a joint overview and scrutiny committee with other local authorities to exercise functions which would otherwise be carried out in relation to health by an existing overview and scrutiny committee.
- 3.3 Westminster has been approached by the strategic health authority for London, known as NHS London to form a joint committee of all 32 London boroughs. NHS London suggests that a joint committee would be best placed to respond to the consultation currently being carried out by NHS London on the results of a report known as 'Healthcare for London: A Framework for Action' published in July 2007.

Healthcare for London Consultation:

- 3.4 The report sets a framework for action as follows
- * Eight reasons why the status-quo of healthcare in London is unacceptable.
 - * How healthcare in London will need to change over the next ten years, driven by demographic changes and technological developments
 - * Common principles for future healthcare services and seven specific clinical areas.
 - * Future models for how care should be organised.
 - * Some of the drivers that will make the report's recommendations a reality, and the next steps.
- 3.5 NHS London plans to conduct a London-wide consultation on the proposals in this report in two phases. Phase 1 will run from November 2007 – February 2008 and will look at different ways of organising and delivering care ('models of care'). Phase 1 will not look at specific service changes or re-design. Any proposed service changes would be consulted on in Phase 2, which does not have a timeline currently. The consultation will be directed centrally by NHS London and implemented locally by individual PCTs.

- 3.6 It is considered appropriate to accede to the request of NHS London by becoming a member of a joint overview and scrutiny committee. In any event, even if Westminster declines to join such a joint committee, the Secretary of State for Health? may require the authority to join such a Committee [what evidence do we have for this?] and it is considered likely that he would do so.
- 3.7 London Boroughs (through the officers' body known as the Joint Scrutiny Network) are in the process of deciding how best to respond to consultation and whether to form a joint committee. In anticipation that the JSN will decide to support a joint committee, JSN recommends that all local authorities obtain their authorities' consent to form a joint committee.
- 3.8 The terms of reference of the joint committee will be determined by a unanimous agreement of all London boroughs prior to the formation of the committee. The terms of reference are likely to be confined to responding to consultation. The details of the terms of reference, to be confined to responding to consultation and any matter incidental to that, will be finalised by the Director of Legal and Administrative Services.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 The decision of the General Purposes Committee to establish a joint committee is a non-executive function which must be approved by the full Council. Local Authorities may agree to establish a joint Committee with other Local Authorities to carry out its duties.
- 4.2 Each London borough will be entitled to nominate one member to sit on the joint committee. A nomination from the Chief Whip will be sought and the Members appointed by the Director of Legal and Administrative Services under his existing delegation.

5. Other Implications

None.

If you have any queries about this report or wish to inspect one of the background papers please contact Tasneem Mueen on 020 7641 3002; Fax No. 020 7641 2917; Email tmueen@westminster.gov.uk

Background Papers

'Healthcare for London: A Framework for Action' published in July 2007