

**ORGANISATION IMPROVEMENT & ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW  
AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION  
HELD ON 18 JUNE 2007  
(FROM 6.35 PM TO 8.00 PM)**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs Atkinson in the Chair. Councillors Galloway, Reg Marsh, Newby, Trotter, Willis and Willoughby.

**01/07 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF**

**SUBSTITUTES:** Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Hawke and Peter Phillips.

(6.35 pm)

**02/07 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were no declarations of interest.

(6.35 pm)

**03/07 - MINUTES:** The Minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 16 April 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

(6.36 pm)

**04/07 – EXEMPT INFORMATION:** There were no exempt information items.

(6.37 pm)

**05/07 – PUBLIC ARRANGEMENTS – QUESTIONS:** There were no questions to consider pursuant to Standing Order 27.

(6.37 pm)

**SCRUTINY MATTERS AND REVIEWS UNDERTAKEN BY THE  
COMMISSION**

**06/07 - PCT SERVICE MODERNISATION - FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN:**

(Councillor Willis declared a personal interest in this item on the basis that as a freelance journalist he had previously reported on issues involving the PCT but, on the basis that the interest was not prejudicial, he remained in the meeting and took part in the debate ) The Chair introduced Mr Lee Squire, Head of Corporate Communications, to address the Commission. He advised that the new PCT commenced on 1 October 2006 and that the Corporate Headquarters were based in Harrogate. The PCT served a population of 765,000 with a budget of £1 billion and had inherited deficits from all four predecessor organisations of £36m. He stated that there was a new approach to practice based commissioning which engaged all clinicians with GP's holding their own budgets and being responsible for their own decision making. He added that the PCT were currently in the recruitment process and that 416 staff still faced the possibility of redundancy. In relation to the budget, it was noted that the £1 billion equated to £1200 per person in North Yorkshire and the unaudited deficit for 2006/07 was £32.607m compared to the forecast deficit of £35m. He stated that service modernisation and financial recovery plan were the

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current core roles of the organisation and that the savings schemes were to be developed by service leads with significant clinical involvement. Members were informed that there would be a small number of effective schemes that were well resourced and service focused that would deliver greater substantial savings rather than attempting to deliver a large number of schemes. In total £9m had been identified to resource the schemes in order to succeed and all aspects of expenditure were open to scrutiny. He then focused upon eight workstreams of the PCT, namely:

- Community services and community hospitals;
- Finance, corporate estates and IM&T;
- Medicines management (prescribing budget of £111m per year);
- Mental health;
- Primary care;
- Specialist commissioning;
- Planned care; and
- Unplanned care.

He highlighted some of the achievements in the first six months of the new PCT and these were identified as a smaller projected deficit of under £35m (£32.607m) at 30 April 2007; contracts had been agreed with all major healthcare providers for 2007/08; investments being made in many healthcare services (18 week wait target); a contract for dental services to start in January 2008 for four new practices across North Yorkshire to take on over 20,000 new NHS patients; and an agreed incentive scheme with GP's.

Questions were then invited. One Member queried the potential redundancies as mentioned in the presentation. Mr Squire advised that these related to management and administration roles and did not affect front line clinical staff and that financial provision had been made to take into account any redundancies. In relation to a query regarding the number of people on the dental data base in Harrogate, it was agreed that this information would be provided to the Scrutiny Officer who would email Members with this information. It was also agreed that he would confirm the length of the contract. He added that there was now a mechanism in place to deal with dental registration and that a Dental Contracts Officer would be appointed. One Member queried the policy regarding the prescribing of medicines and, in particular, the high cost drugs and under what circumstances these were issued. He advised that there was a High Cost/Exceptional Case Approval Panel in place to consider such cases. The issue of over subscribing of drugs and medicines was also discussed and it was commented that the PCT should consult with pharmacists to help reduce this problem. One Member queried whether there was a policy for non-resuscitation. Mr Squires advised that he was not aware of such a policy but would clarify the situation and provide the information to the Scrutiny Officer. In response to Members' queries generally, Mr Squire agreed to provide information regarding how to register for healthcare. It was noted that this information was also on the PCT homepage. Mr Squire agreed to update the Commission on a regular basis regarding its performance and receive further reports at future meetings.

The Chair thanked Mr Squire for his presentation.

(6.37 pm - 7.30 pm )

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07/07 – **CAR PARKING REVIEW:** The Commission unanimously **agreed** that, due to the considerable work already undertaken by the Panel, it would not appoint a new Member at this stage to replace former Councillor Robin Adderley and that the Membership would remain as follows:

Councillor Hawke;  
Councillor Reg Marsh;  
Councillor Parnaby; and  
Councillor Willoughby.

(7.45 pm - 7.50 pm)

### 08/07 – **HBC REPRESENTATIVE ON THE NYCC SCRUTINY HEALTH**

**COMMITTEE:** The Scrutiny Officer submitted a written report which sought nominations for one Member of the Organisation Improvement and Environment Commission to serve as the Council's representative on the North Yorkshire County Council Scrutiny of Health Committee.

### **RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):**

That Councillor Mrs Atkinson be appointed as Harrogate Borough Council's representative on the NYCC Scrutiny Health Committee

(7.50 pm - 7.51 pm)

09/07 – **PLANNING SERVICE REVIEW:** Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions in relation to the informal presentation regarding the above given by the Planning Advisory Service/I&DEA. One Member queried the comment in relation to the Enforcement Section. The Head of Planning Services stated that there had been a greater expectation placed upon the Enforcement Section due to a significant increase in the number of enforcement complaints over the last year. He commented that the service needed reviewing and refreshing with an analysis of the resources required to create a service fit for purpose and this was part of the current action plan. One Member queried how much weight was given to the review. The Head of Planning Services advised that a considerable amount of weight would be given to the results of the review and the recommended areas of improvement. It was noted that the Planning Division and DCPI had carried out a great deal of work towards the review and the results were very much welcomed. The Scrutiny Officer added that, once the final report was received, the Planning Division would formally respond to the recommendations made. Councillor Willis wished it to be minuted that, in his experience, the Enforcement Section had proved to be a very useful and successful and had always kept Members informed with issues. A discussion ensued regarding Parish Councils and the consensus was that it would be advantageous if they received planning training.

(7.30 pm - 7.45 pm)

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10/07 - **REQUESTS FOR INCLUSION OF ITEMS IN FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME:** There was none.

(7.52 pm )

### **MATTER HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT**

11/07 - **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS:** The Commission noted the Key Decisions which fell within its remit.

(7.53 pm - 8.00 pm)