

News

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Scrutiny of Health Committee Concerned Over Local Hospice Funding

North Yorkshire Council's Scrutiny of Health Committee has become concerned over a reduction in funding to support some of the County's local hospices.

Following a recent meeting, North Yorkshire Council's Scrutiny of Health Committee pledged its unanimous support to North Yorkshire Hospice Care, St. Catherine's Hospice and St. Leonards Hospice in helping to raise awareness of the issues facing the Trusts.

Members were updated by the Chief Executive Officers of all three Trust's which highlighted the struggle they are all facing in raising sufficient funding to continue to provide adequate and essential end of life and palliative services. This includes specialist inpatient beds, community-based end of life care, outpatient clinics, lymphoedema services and bereavement counselling and support.

Chairman of the Scrutiny of Health Committee Cllr Andrew Lee said *"I think I speak for the whole Committee when I say how shocked, saddened and concerned we are upon hearing the situation within our local hospices and the shortfall they are all facing in terms of funding. These hospices and many others all provide a very important and much needed support network both for patients and their families at a very sad and vulnerable time. We must do all that we can to raise awareness and support them in order to allow them to continue to provide this essential service"*.

The committee were very concerned to hear that a number of factors are contributing to the situation including lack of funding, increased running costs, reduced income from fundraising and differing funding models and contracts that provide the initial source of income from the NHS.

"The Committee and I fully appreciate that the country faces huge financial challenges at present. The cost to provide services across these three hospices is around £20m with over 70% of that figure having to be raised through fundraising alone". added Cllr Lee. *"I shall be highlighting this with my colleagues in the NHS when I next meet with them as we need to ensure we are all doing our utmost to support and raise awareness of this situation"*.

Councillor Lee also highlighted that *"any significant shortfall in funding could potentially lead to a reduction and closure of some of the services. I don't think anyone wants this situation to become a reality"*.

Committee chair: Councillor Andrew Lee

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Note to editors:



The Scrutiny of Health Committee is made up of 16 Councillors, with currently 1 vacant North Yorkshire Independent seat.

A further update from the CEO's will be presented to the Committee for consideration next year.

Key points from the presentation for information only;

- Three hospices serving North Yorkshire and York; St Catherine's based in Scarborough, St. Leonard's based in York and Saint Michael's and Herriot Hospices (merged) based in Harrogate and Thirsk
- The total cost of providing these services across the three hospices is circa £20m and NHS funding of £5.6m was received as a contribution to this
- Four to five years ago the NHS funding was between 35-40% of total service
- The trust continues to seek funding from all avenues.

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