

Cheltenham Borough Council
Social and Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 3rd
April 2003

Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the NHS
Report of the Group Director Social and Community

1. Summary and recommendation

- 1.1 The attached letter from the County Council formally invites this Council to nominate a representative and substitute to be co-opted onto their newly established NHS Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 **I therefore recommend that this committee recommends to council from amongst its membership a representative and substitute for co-option onto the County Council NHS Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

2. Background

- 2.1 The new committee will be based on the "strategic model" as previously endorsed by this committee. This council has been represented on the joint working group which has recommended the preferred model initially by Councillor Forbes and subsequently by Councillor Moreton.
- 2.2 The working group has now almost finished its work and the County Council has formally approved the establishment of the new Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.3 Members have previously taken the view that as the NHS falls within the functional remit of the Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it would be appropriate for this council's representative to be drawn from its membership. There is some logic in continuing Councillor Mrs. Moreton's involvement in this area, subject to her own willingness to do so. In any event, our representative(s) must be a non-executive scrutiny member.

3. Other issues

- 3.1 The attached letter also refers to the costs of establishing and servicing the new committee and seeks a contribution of £5,000 from each of the District Councils.

There is undoubtedly a significant cost involved in effective overview and scrutiny, particularly in the area of health services, but it is clear that the responsibility to provide the function rests with the County Council. I understand that some lobbying has taken place at national level to secure government support.

- 3.2 In the light of our own recent budget discussions, particularly on the subject of democratic support, I have made it clear to County Council officers that no budget provision has been made for any such contribution, although we would expect to pick up any costs directly related to our representative (travel, training etc.) and would be prepared to provide rooms and refreshments for any meetings held in Cheltenham.

4. Implications

- 4.1 **Financial** A request for a contribution of £5,000 to the costs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been made to the council. The County Council has been informed that Cheltenham Borough Council has no budgetary provision in 2003/04, hence is not in a position to make such a contribution. The marginal costs of providing a representative can be met from within existing budgets.
- 4.2 **Legal** None arising from this report.
- 4.3 **Personnel** None arising from this report.
- 4.4 **Equal opportunities, social justice and anti-poverty** None arising from this report.
- 4.5 **Environmental** None arising from this report.

Background Papers

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Contact Officer

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