To Chair of Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)

Or: local Scrutiny committees/ panels

Or: Health & Wellbeing Boards

Or: Council Leader and Councillors

Dear Xxxxxxxx

[Thank you and Councillors on the Xxxx Committee for the outcome on xxxxxxx with respect to the xxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxx.]

We are addressing this email to you [and/or to all Councillors] about the STP.

[Your local committee eg JHOSC] raised with the [local STP team] (led by Xxxxxx Xxxxxx Chief Officer of Xxxxx CCG/ Other) whether the STP had an iterative plan with deadlines. [The STP team] replied that STPs were high level 5 year rolling plans with no deadlines. We expressed our concern to you about the significance of a 23rd December deadline which we had referenced as a key date. You said [you would/asked us to] check on this.

The STP team issued a clarification that the first 2 years of the STP ***is*** the CCG operating plan and that indeed there is a national deadline for signing of contracts with submission of final 2017/19 operational plans by 23rd December 2016.

The evidence you asked us to provide is in the NHS England and NHS Improvement document issued to Commissioners in September 2016 and titled:

*NHS Operational Planning and Contracting Guidance* 2017-2019.

It is a 69-page document which sets out explicitly the requirement for all CCGs to submit a full draft 2-year operational plan (one for each CCG) by 24th November 2016 and to meet a national deadline for signing of contracts with providers and submission of final 2017-2019 operational plans aligned with contracts signed off (both) by 23rd December 2016. The document starts:

*"This document explains how the NHS operational planning and contracting processes will now change to support Sustainability and Transformation Plans and the 'financial reset’."*

The guidance makes clear that these plans and contracts **will be implementing the STP plans**for the local area**:**

***“Operational plans for 2017/18 and 2018/19 are the detailed plans for the first two years of the STP.”***

[Reference: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/NHS-operational-planning-guidance-201617-201819.pdf>

In addition to the link above, we attach for convenience extracts from the guidance and the timetable.]

**The import and urgency of our email to you stems from the NHSE’s imposed deadline of 23rd December**

(a)    for sign-off of operational plans for all CCGs and providers (*ie including our local areas’ STP*) **and**

(b)    **signed contracts between commissioners and providers** for the next 2 years

The direct link between the STP (which is supposed to be a joint venture between Health and Local Authorities and other partners) and the operational plans and signed contracts is as follows:

The NHS England guidance to commissioners states that the contract between CCGs and their providers **must align with the STP** and, in particular, must sign up to a commitment that the operational plan and contractual agreement will deliver the financial cutback imposed – in our area, an *annual* shortfall of £XXXm by 2020/21.

[Local specifics within the STP that councillors need to know are basically being signed off without their agreement or scrutiny can be added here if relevant]

We submit that it is imperative for Scrutiny Councillors and for Chairs of Health and Wellbeing Boards to use this narrow window of time to get fully up to speed on the draft plans which all 6 CCGs were required to submit to NHSE/NHS Improvement by 24th November, in order to be able to see where and under what circumstances the alignments required for [our local] STP are being built at this very moment.

These are new landscapes. They are fast moving and with huge consequences on the local social care and health provision and on the local population.

It was clear to us from the discussion at [JHOSC/other local committee] that work is required on the accountability and governance of STPs. In the meantime, a democratic deficit is growing and we look to our elected representatives to address it.

**We are asking therefore as a matter of urgency:**

Could you as JHOSC Scrutiny Chair and all Councillors ask for the [N=3-6] CCGs to share details of their 2017/19 operational plans?

This will, in the first instance, enable an understanding of precisely what impact the Financial System Control Totals (Page 17) may have on the case being made for Elective Orthopaedic Care Centres.

With thanks and kind regards

xxxxx

Local KONP / Campaign / STP group



