

Kirklees Council

Scrutiny Report – Calderdale & Kirklees Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

Kirklees Members: Councillor Elizabeth Smaje
Councillor Jo Lawon
Councillor Ashleigh Robinson
Councillor Jane Rylah

Period of Update: June 2024 to date

Overview:

The Calderdale and Kirklees Joint Health Scrutiny Committee (C&KJHSC) was established to examine proposals from the Calderdale and the Greater Huddersfield Clinical Commissioning Groups (the CCGs), which now form part of the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, for hospital reconfiguration. Details of the JHOSC's current role and functions can be found in its Terms of Reference [Calderdale and Kirklees Joint Health Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference](#)

The JHOSC continues to monitor and scrutinise the work that is taking place to develop and progress the revised reconfiguration of hospital services at Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust.

Membership of the JHOSC for the 2024/25 municipal year is Cllrs Elizabeth Smaje (Chair), Jane Rylah, Ashleigh Robinson and Jo Lawson from Kirklees Council and Cllrs Colin Hutchinson (Co-Chair) Howard Blagbrough, Mike Barnes and Ashley Evans from Calderdale Council.

Committee Meeting 25 June 2024

webcast can be viewed [Calderdale and Kirklees Joint Health Scrutiny Committee - 25th June 2024 - YouTube](#)

Update on the Opening of the A & E at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary

The JHSC was pleased to see, following a short delay, the new Accident and Emergency Department in full operation after opening at its new location in Huddersfield Royal Infirmary (HRI) in May 2024. At its meeting on 25 June 2024 the JHSC received an update on the opening, which advised that the department was working well, and regular reviews would be undertaken to ensure that any changes to the way of working maximised benefits.

The JHSC heard that important lessons had been learned from the development and the build of the A&E, which meant that for the remainder of the reconfiguration to take place at both HRI and Calderdale Royal Hospital (CRH), there would be tighter oversight of inspections with an increased level of supervision of sub-contractors.

The Committee received a deputation from a member of the public in relation to the use of Physician Associates in the Accident and Emergency Department at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary. In response, Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust (CHFT) explained that Physician Associates no longer worked night shifts when there was no consultant on shift, and there had been changes made in the way the Physician Associates were supervised.

Yorkshire Ambulance Service

The Committee invited Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) to the meeting to discuss work being undertaken that related to the reconfiguration programme at CRH and HRI.

The Committee heard that the service now had specialist paramedics in place (who were able to prescribe antibiotics to patients), Critical Care Paramedics, Helicopter Emergency Service Paramedics and Mental Health Practitioners.

YAS explained that they ensured ambulances were strategically placed and that they were working to full capacity. In relation to hospital transfers, the times showed that this was going well, with the aim of providing a 15-minute response time.

The Committee asked how the new A&E at HRI had impacted handover times. YAS advised that there were some operational challenges with staff familiarisation of the new unit, but this had settled, and handover times now averaged 20 minutes.

Reopening of the Bronte Unit at Dewsbury District Hospital

Following the decision taken at the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on 22 November, the C&K JHOSC began the in-depth scrutiny of the midwife birthing units affecting residents in the Kirklees area (and by extension parts of Calderdale and Wakefield).

The Birth Centre re-opened as planned on 1 April and by 31 May 2024 there had been 68 admissions. There were 6 FTE midwives as part of an established team and additional midwives had been recruited so that there was more than the minimum required, ensuring the Trust was in a strong position with minimal vacancies.

Mid Yorkshire Teaching Trust continued to work with CHFT and at the end of Q1, the opening of the Bronte Birth Centre would be more widely publicised which would provide an indication of any wider demand at HRI.

Outcomes:

- The Committee agreed that a further update would be received following the A&E Unit being opened for six months.
- The Committee was satisfied with the update provided by YAS.

Calderdale and Kirklees JHOSC Meeting – 15 October 2024

Webcast can be viewed [Agenda for Calderdale and Kirklees Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 15th October, 2024, 10.00 am | Calderdale Council](#)

Maternity Services

The Committee heard that despite consistent recruitment activity, CHFT had not seen the growth in workforce required to safely provide care across all previous birth settings. This was in part due to the numbers of midwives reducing their contracted hours to improve work-life balance, although the position at MYTT was much improved. This workforce difficulty adversely affected CHFT plans to expand services contracted during the pandemic and afterwards, and it also impacted on the ability to re-open the HRI birthing centre.

MYTT was unable to attend the discussion but will be attending the next session in March 2025.

Reconfiguration Update

The Committee received a progress update on the opening of the new A&E, including key variations since the last meeting of the JHOSC in early November. It also provided an update on negotiations with the Treasury re the reconfiguration along with an update on the financial situation regarding the new A&E.

The Outline Business Case remained with the Treasury for review and approval. Progress was still being made regarding the developments at Calderdale Royal Hospital, the Learning and Development Centre was expected to be completed by summer 2024 and the enabling works for the new multi-story car park had commenced.

Outcome & looking forward

The Committee concluded that:

- In relation to maternity services, CHFT and MYTT return to the next meeting of the JHOSC to update further on :-
 - Recruitment and retention of staff
 - Sustainability of Bronte Birth Centre
 - Any concerns about the reopening of the Bronte Birth Centre
 - Future plans for reopening HRI Birth Centre
 - An update on the relocation of the Birth Centre at CRH

- In relation to the reconfiguration, CHFT return to discuss:-
 - Future use of the estate at HRI
 - Update on wider transformation
 - Communication plan for the reconfiguration
 - Update on the OBC and financial aspects
 - Design for new clinical build
 - Update on operation of the A&E and lessons learned