

# Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

15 November 2018



## Future of ward six, Bishop Auckland Hospital

---

### Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Partnerships and Transformation

---

#### Purpose

1. To provide the Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information following recent press articles concerning the future of ward six, Bishop Auckland Hospital.

#### Background

2. At its meeting on 7 September 2018, the Committee considered a report from Lesley Jeavons, Director of Integrated Care, County Durham Integrated Care Partnership which provided an update in respect of the role and function of part of the community hospital offer across County Durham with a view to recommending options for service delivery over a medium to long term. The report referenced a number of issues that had been considered by Commissioners and County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust in respect of the ongoing Community hospitals review.
3. The report detailed the community hospital estate across County Durham as follows:

<b>Community Hospital</b>	<b>Bed Compliment</b>
<b>North Durham</b>	
Shotley Bridge	8
Chester-le-Street Community Hospital	16 - 23
<b>DDES</b>	
Peterlee Community Hospital	Owned by NT&H FT and Barchester 0 beds other than IS
Sedgefield	16
Weardale	16
Richardson	16
Bishop Auckland	24 step down (ward 6)

4. In considering the report the Adults Wellbeing and Health OSC were informed that:

- Since reducing the bed base in September 2017 across three of the hospitals it is clear that utilisation of the remaining beds is operating at a level which indicates the resource is being used effectively.
- CDDFT have the flexibility to open additional beds in times of surge and increased activity.
- The link with a place based service offer also needs to be considered as TAPs develop further and community services are delivered within localities, it would appear that a locality based community hospital function as part of a menu of services, will be a valuable asset.
- Chief Officers had received a recommendation from the then Director of Integration, that no change other than the work that is underway in respect of Shotley Bridge Hospital should be made to the Community Hospital estate. Furthermore whilst the continuing financial pressure across the NHS and social care economy must be recognised, it should be balanced against the reality of ongoing lease agreements and associated costs to both commissioners and providers should a premises close, as well as the availability of alternative services, the need for dispositions for patients from acute sites and the transport concerns of local people.
- This does not however, negate the need for internal efficiencies to be explored and CDDFT are keen to carry out additional work in this regard.
- There may be changes to the clinic activity carried out in community hospitals over time. This may relate to a range of factors, such as changes to commissioning pathways or clinical guidelines.
- The previous bed reductions across the DDES Community Hospital estate will continue to be monitored and information gathered to inform whether the bed base is being utilised effectively. It should be noted that as more services are delivered in a community setting, activity and demand may reduce further, so requiring consideration to be given to further reductions in the future.

### **Ward six, Bishop Auckland Hospital**

5. The Northern Echo published an article on 4 October headlined “Fears for Bishop Auckland Hospital amid 24-bed ward closure plans” which referenced consultation by County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust on the closure of ward six Bishop Auckland hospital. The ward is a nurse-led “step down” ward for patients who no longer require doctor care but are not ready to go home.

6. Following representations from local Councillors and the M.P. for Bishop Auckland, Helen Goodman, the Chair of the Adults Wellbeing and Health OSC wrote to the Chief Executive and Chairman of County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust expressing concern “at the absence of formal consultation on the proposed ward closure which we consider to be a substantial variation/service development.” In view of the proposed staff consultation and the associated closure timetable, the Chairman requested that “the Foundation Trust pauses the current consultation and proposed closure timetable to allow for the issue to be discussed at the Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting scheduled for 15 November 2018.”
7. A copy of the letter is attached to this report at Appendix 2.
8. The Foundation Trust agreed to pause the proposed ward six closure plan and attend the Adults Wellbeing and Health OSC to discuss the future of ward six and the outcome of the staff consultation exercise.

### **Latest Position**

9. Representatives of County Durham CCGs and County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust will attend the meeting to provide an update in respect of the issues facing the Trust in respect of the future of ward six, the staff consultation undertaken and the feedback obtained as part of the process.
10. The Trust have indicated that the formal staff consultation ended on 31 October 2018 and a meeting is planned with staff on 6 November 2018 to discuss the feedback from this consultation and discuss options for the future of ward six. The outcome of the meeting will be reported verbally to the Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
11. County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust have prepared a detailed report which is attached to this report (Appendix 3).

### **Recommendation**

12. Members of the Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to receive this report and consider and comment on the report and the information contained therein.

### **Background Papers**

None

---

**Contact and Author: Stephen Gwilym, Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer Tel: 03000 268140**

---

---

## **Appendix 1: Implications**

---

**Finance – None**

**Staffing - None**

**Risk - None**

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None**

**Accommodation - None**

**Crime and Disorder – None**

**Human Rights - None**

**Consultation –** County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust has undertaken formal staff consultation and engagement and the Trust will report the results of that process.

**Procurement - None**

**Disability Issues – None**

**Legal Implications –** This report has been produced in accordance with the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and wellbeing boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.