



worcestershire county council

Mr Sandy Taylor
Chief Executive
Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust
Caludon Centre
Clifford Bridge Road
Coventry
CV2 2TE

27 March 2008

Our ref: sc/56:730/25
Ask for: Sandra Connolly

Dear Mr Taylor,

CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF THE LEA CASTLE CENTRE

Thank you for your attendance with Roisin Fallon-Williams at Worcestershire County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) on Thursday, 13 March 2008 regarding the future of the Lea Castle Centre. This letter reflects the considered views of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in response Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust and Worcestershire Primary Care Trust's joint consultation on the proposed closure of the Lea Castle Centre.

In preparing this response the HOSC has undertaken the following:

- Held a meeting on 13 March 2008 to discuss the details of the proposal with representatives of your Trust and service commissioners;
- Visited the Lea Castle Centre on 27 February 2008;
- Considered views from a number of third parties, including MP, County Councillor, Patient and Public Involvement Forum, Lea Castle Action Group, Wyre Forest District Council and parents of residents at the Lea Castle Centre; and
- Individual Councillors attended the Trust's public consultation meetings.

Following the most helpful presentation and question and answer session on 13 March, Members of the HOSC have agreed to offer the following comments on Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust's proposals for the Lea Castle Centre.

In summary, the HOSC considers that the proposed closure of the Lea Castle Centre is an appropriate course of action, given national policy and local

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commissioning intentions, subject to Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust and Worcestershire Primary Care Trust ensuring that current residents of Lea Castle are transferred to appropriate, alternative services before the Centre closes, and that there should only be a single transfer to a permanent placement for each service user.

The HOSC recognised that national policy changes have been central to the situation now facing the Trust and fully understand the need for the Trust to review the future of the Lea Castle Centre. Members considered that it is virtually inevitable that the Centre as it is now can only have a relatively short life-span given national policy and local commissioning intentions.

Acknowledging the tension between planning for the future and pre-empting the outcome of the consultation, Members agreed that, if the decision were to be taken to close the Centre, they would wish to receive a full and detailed update in order to be assured that all current patients are found appropriate services and that these have been fully discussed with relatives of patients and medical advisors. It was agreed, therefore, that if the decision were taken to close the Centre, Members should meet Trust and Primary Care Trust representatives and Mrs Liv Evans in 2-3 months for an update on the transition process and progress in commissioning locally based services to achieve the above services.

At the HOSC on 13 March, it was very apparent to Members that the Centre and its staff are held in very high regard by the Trust and families of the residents. This has been clear too from correspondence sent to the HOSC and should be commended. Members are confident that the professionals within the Trust and PCT will aim to ensure the best possible outcome for the current residents at the Centre and were assured by the PCT's commitment to commissioning specialised and appropriate services for the residents of Worcestershire based at Lea Castle, and their intention to provide an alternative assessment and treatment facility. It is hoped that with the support of the Trust, PCT and staff, the inevitable anxieties about forthcoming changes may soon be overcome with the commissioning of individual care packages for the residents of Lea Castle.

Given the widespread respect for the commitment, quality and knowledge of the staff at the Lea Castle Centre, Members were pleased that there is a commitment within the Trust and the wider NHS and health economy to ensure that jobs are available for those staff requiring them. It is to be welcomed that their skills will continue to benefit the local health and social care sector. The willingness of staff to remain at the Lea Castle Centre until the future of service users is assured clearly demonstrates their commitment to the residents and services provided and I would ask that you pass on to them the Committee's appreciation for their dedication.

With regards the requested update on the transition process and progress in commissioning locally based services, the Health OSC has a meeting scheduled on 23 June at 2pm at County Hall, Worcester. I am copying this letter to Worcestershire Primary Care Trust and Mrs Liv Evans and would be grateful if

all parties could liaise with Sandra Connolly (Tel 01905 766606 / sconnolly@worcestershire.gov.uk) to advise if this date is convenient and appropriate.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you once more for meeting the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss your proposals for the future of the Lea Castle Centre in detail.

I look forward to receiving your response to this letter and the Trust's decision on the future of the Lea Castle Centre as a result of the consultation.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Campion". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John Campion
Chairman, Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Copy to:
Paul Bates, Chief Executive, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Lola Abudu, Director of Planning and Partnership, Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Stephen Chandler, Head of Health and Social Care (Learning Disabilities)
Liv Evans
