

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Acting Director of Social Work Services

Health Improvement and Social Justice Partnership: 17 May 2006

Subject: New Children's Hospital Consultation

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report advises the Partnership of the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde consultation (Appendix 1) around the proposed siting of the new children's hospital.

2. Background

- 2.1 The New Children's Hospital Consultation document re-states the decision already endorsed by the Scottish Executive to bring together maternity, adult and children's services onto a single hospital site (triple co-location), and confirms that £100 million has been set aside for this purpose. The consultation proposes that the new hospital should be sited at the Southern General Hospital, and explains the rationale for this being the preferred site.
- 2.2 The sites initially considered were the Southern General Hospital, Gartnavel General Hospital and Glasgow Royal Infirmary. The options appraisal indicated that Glasgow Royal Infirmary would require an additional ten storeys on existing buildings to accommodate the new hospital, giving a building of 17 storeys. Analysis also indicated that there was no possibility of a physical link between any potential expansion and the existing Princess Royal Maternity Hospital. Gartnavel General Hospital was discounted as a viable option on the grounds that it does not have adequate existing adult and maternity services. This left the single option of the Southern General site.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1 **The level of planned investment and the standard of the proposed facilities are to be welcomed. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde are to be congratulated in securing the funding for this development.** There are a number of potential issues for West Dunbartonshire residents if the new hospital is sited at the Southern General.

Access

- 3.2 People living in Dumbarton and Alexandria (covered by the former NHS Argyll & Clyde NHS Board) have long complained about the difficulties in accessing

hospital sites south of the River Clyde. The proposals if taken to conclusion will result in an increased number of West Dunbartonshire residents experiencing such difficulties, given that public transport routes mainly follow corridors north and south of the river into Glasgow. West Dunbartonshire outpatient attendees and visitors to inpatients are likely to experience lengthy, complicated and expensive journeys to the Southern General site. The consultation highlights advances in transport infrastructure that will help access to the Southern General site. More clarity is needed about how these opportunities will translate into better public transport services.

Patient Flows

- 3.3** There is no specific mention of the former NHS Argyll & Clyde territory of Lomond, and it is unclear how the distribution of these patients will be split between the Southern General and Royal Alexandra Hospitals. The table at paragraph 4.16 of the consultation attempts to indicate where current patient flows are located. However it is not clear whether this table relates to the current Southern General or Queen Mother's Hospitals, a combination of both, or some other configuration. It is also not clear what proportion of the former NHS Argyll & Clyde patients come from areas that are now within the new NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde system. It is important to clarify these points because the paper asserts that access is a regional or West of Scotland issue rather than a local one. If the table relates only to the Queen Mother's Hospital and a high proportion of the 28% NHS A & C patients are from the north of the Clyde corridor, there is a clear access issue for local people (rather than regional).

Vulnerable Patient Groups

- 3.4** The access issues highlighted in respect of the general population are exacerbated for pregnant women who have other vulnerabilities such as addiction, long-term limiting illnesses, mental health problems or disability which may require access to specialist services for both them and their newborn babies (for example the specialist addiction service currently provided by the Princess Royal Maternity Unit). While paragraph 7.6 of the consultation indicates that alternative arrangements for accessible antenatal care will be made for the West of Glasgow, there is no commitment to the level of these arrangements or whether these will be appropriate for more vulnerable pregnant women.

Young People's Services

- 3.5** The proposal to extend cover for young people up to 16 years of age is welcome.

Phasing of Developments

- 3.6** The proposed closure of the Queen Mother's Hospital prior to the completion of the Southern General site development needs to be explained more fully. The absorption of the former NHS Argyll and Clyde acute sector within the NHS Greater Glasgow Acute Services strategy will be complex. It will be important for patients and communities across West Dunbartonshire to believe that their needs have been addressed adequately.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** The consultation appears to have no direct impact on West Dunbartonshire Council personnel.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The consultation appears to have no direct impact on West Dunbartonshire Council finance.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1** The consultation does not offer options but expresses a single proposal by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde that the new children's hospital should be sited at the Southern General Hospital. The purpose of issuing the paper as a consultation is therefore unclear.
- 6.2** The paper outlines planned facilities and investment and the clinical benefits of these, however there is no clear rationale for why these benefits should be specific only to the SGH site. The explanation within the consultation that there are insufficient adult and maternity services at Gartnavel has been made without any apparent exploration of the feasibility of transferring existing maternity services in the SGH to Gartnavel. The site at Gartnavel which was originally identified for cardiothoracic services (prior to the decision to locate to the Golden Jubilee National Hospital) may offer sufficient physical space for such a transfer.
- 6.3** Current maternity service configurations were developed prior to the expansion of NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, and without regard to maternity services at the Royal Alexandra Hospital. If the new hospital is sited at the Southern General, there will be a concentration of provision south of the Clyde with very little to the north or west of Glasgow. This section should contain a summary of developments/arguments leading to recommendations.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1** **The Partnership is asked to commend NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde for securing this investment and the New Children's Hospital**, and to consider the report and recommendations, and to make comment to the Acting Director of Social Work Services.
- 7.2** The Partnership is asked to instruct the Joint Strategy Groups (Community Care and Children's Services) to develop a detailed response to the document taking account of the issues described in Sections 3 and 6 of this report, and any other issues that the Partnership considers relevant.

- 7.3** The Partnership is asked to instruct that the response be submitted to NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde no later than the response deadline of 2nd June 2006.



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Background Papers: None referred to within the report as consultation forms appendix.

Wards Affected: All council Wards.