



Ashby de la Zouch Civic Society

Shaping the future and preserving the heritage of our town

30-7-15

To the members of the Leicestershire County Council Health Overview Scrutiny Committee,

The enclosed document summarises the recent history of events leading to the proposed disposal of Ashby and District Hospital. We are respectfully referring this matter to you, asking you to reconsider the evidence for closure because we believe that:

- a) you could not have had all the relevant information you required in your previous considerations and
- b) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Leicestershire County Council has the power to request the Secretary of State to re-consider the closure and disposal of the hospital as we have been advised recently.

As you are aware one of the preliminaries to disposal of an NHS property is a demonstration of **public and patient engagement**. In this case this seems to have consisted of less than one eighth of a percent of the population of Ashby's 13,000 residents, is this a demonstration of fair engagement?

Your OSC is charged with reviewing the adequacy of performance indicators to monitor change the delivery of healthcare . In this case the NHS has offered many performance indicators but in our view the real tests or indicators for the loss of the hospital are: "where are the patients being treated ? Is it local? And if not, where?"

We understand that according to your guidelines , you would expect to see **a clear strategy and action plan that takes into account changes in the service environment**. Therefore, are you convinced , that the following has been adequately taken into account in this closure plan:

1. The population increase in and around Ashby due to increased home building ,
2. The expected increase in an ageing population with the associated increased health needs
3. The access issues due to poor transport links in Ashby de la Zouch ,
4. Bed planning which demonstrates the synergy between acute and community hospital beds in Leicestershire and across the borders of Derbyshire and Staffordshire which reflects the traditional referral patterns for Ashby patients .It follows that this should assure the public of an increased capacity to cope with the apparent increasing failure of the NHS to cope with winter bed crises?
5. There exists a convincing evidence base for the alternative treatment options to the in-patient admissions at ADH.

Your committee needs to be confident that the proposed strategies **are adequately resourced in terms of money and staff**. We wonder whether you have seen a straightforward explanation of capital and revenue expenditure forecasts of all the available options set out before the closure decision; and whether you can be confident of workforce planning which are paramount to the newly proposed alternatives to in patient care to be delivered in the Community. We are particularly worried about current skilled staff shortages and the rising

costs of unskilled labour which will be required to support people in their own homes with the introduction of the Living Wage? (BBC report of 27 July 2015 , by Nick Tigge)

When you review the full panoply of services designed to replace the hospital can you say that the public as service users of the future have been consulted? Does the Business case prior to the decision to close look like the Implementation Business Case drawn up in November last year?

Has the public been consulted on the use of building changes such as the Leisure Centre at Hood Park being used for health purposes rather than the leisure function for which it was gifted?

Unless you can see full and satisfactory reassurances to these doubts we ask that you should, in your role as guardians for the people of Ashby and District, refer the matter to the Secretary of State.

Yours Sincerely

Mr Ken Ward

Chairman

Ashby Civic Society

Enclosed: The Imminent Closure of Ashby Cottage Hospital, is it flawed?