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WARRINGTON
Borough Council

Warrington Borough Council

■

Local Plan

Preferred Development Option

Regulation 18 Consultation

Standard Response Form

July 2017

2: Questions

Question 1

Do you have any comments to make about how we've worked out the need for new homes and employment land in Warrington over the next 20 years?

Response:

This response is provided by Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the only acute hospital provider in the Borough responsible for the acute care needs of the populations of both Warrington and Halton Boroughs. In an average year, this Trust sees almost 110K patients through its A&E department and more than 250,000 outpatient appointments. With 4,400 staff it is one of the biggest employers in the Borough at least two thirds of whom live in the Borough.

Insofar as we are responding as an organisation, we will restrict our commentary on specific elements out with our remit such as the choice of sites for development, however can assure the Council we have made significant efforts to ensure that our 4400 staff have been made fully aware of both the consultation and how they can contribute on a personal level.

Please proceed to Q7 for our full response.

Question 7

Do you agree with our Preferred Development Option for meeting Warrington's future development needs?

Response:

The Trust welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation. For context:

1. The Trust is involved in discussions and planning about Healthcare Provision in the Borough through close working with Commissioners; is a member of the Warrington Health and Wellbeing Board and regularly attends/presents to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

At a planning/estates level members of our estates team have joined planning/transport meetings with partners in the Borough including the Transformation Estates Group.

The Trust welcome's WBC's offer to consider forming a subgroup to consider future plans for Warrington Hospital including consideration of site options which would certainly assist the Trust in our assessment of needs and requirements compared to the current site.

2. The Trust regrets that the invitation to participate in the Local Plan consultation was received on the day that the public consultation opened, which only permitted minimal time to gather views from our extensive range of stakeholders before the consultation closed. We would welcome further opportunities to engage patients, visitors, staff, communities around the Local Plan and specifically on future Healthcare provision in Warrington, we would be pleased to host exhibitions or 'drop in' sessions at our hospital which has a significant footfall of Warrington patients, staff and visitors every day.

As an organisation we applaud the vision of the Council for the Borough, we, like the Council, wish the town to grow, develop and prosper. However, observe that in the Council's 60-page consultation document the term 'infrastructure' was used liberally, yet the word 'hospital' was absent. According to growth predictions the growing population would be supported by four new primary schools and a large secondary school and therefore a corresponding population of at circa 50K. As an integral system partner the Council is aware that the hospital is already struggling to treat its existing patients

The population profile for the Borough of Warrington as a whole is older than the national average making it an older person's location. The Council's own JSNA of 2016-17 notes that *'There is a need to develop a comprehensive, joined-up, local healthy ageing strategy to address the needs of older people.'* While we as a system are working hard to this end, we know that the reality is capped public sector funding for the foreseeable future, reducing numbers of health and social care professionals coming into the system and the loss of interest by the private sector in the provision of

Question 7 cont./

vital support/step down care. We also note the fundamental public health strategies driving a healthier population but this will in reality take one if not two generations to impact in the way that we need.

We note that in the zones set out for Warrington that a 'healthcare facility' was listed as part of the infrastructure but no detail as to what this would be. **We ask that the Council involve the hospital in developing specifications for these healthcare facilities given that Integrated Care delivered (where possible) 'out of hospital' and 'closer to home' is a key part of our strategy.** Without such specifics, we are not assured that developers will fully deliver all the elements of their planning permissions, such as building a small, single GP facility which will not in itself prevent emergency admissions to the hospital, even if it were possible to staff the Borough to even 90% of the required GPs.

In providing our response as an organisation we confine our attention on the Council's first Strategic Objective for the Local Plan: *"To enable the transition of Warrington from a New Town to a New City through the ongoing regeneration of Inner Warrington, the delivery of strategic and local infrastructure, the strengthening of existing neighbourhoods and the creation of new sustainable neighbourhoods whilst delivering a minimum of 22,260 new homes (equating to 1,113 per year) between 2017 and 2037."*

1. The ongoing regeneration of inner Warrington

We observe that the Council has not included the existing Warrington Hospital site in its plans given that the site is prime retail, community and/or housing space for the new Inner City. The development of the inner town will bring more people into the town which we welcome, yet this will result in even more congestion on the neighbouring roads and roads feeding to the bridges and motorways – given we have at least 3K staff, 100K inpatients (all with visitors) and 250,000 outpatient appointments moving in and around the site each year.

We thank the Council for recognising that Warrington needs a new, purpose-built modern hospital facility and asks the Council to consider the provision of an alternative site for Warrington Hospital to a location served by public transport and good road networks and that is accessible to the people of Warrington.

Question 7 cont./

2. The delivery of strategic and local infrastructure

As described earlier, we were disappointed to see that no provision of hospital facilities had been included in the plan, yet the addition of 4 new primary schools and a large secondary school were included. We also note that significant work is planned to include new roadways and additional bridge access. Yet healthcare provision has not been fully addressed and is simply described as 'healthcare facility'.

Warrington needs a new, modern, purpose-built hospital located on a more suitable site that is accessible for all.

The Council is aware of the Trust's vision for Warrington Hospital, that of a smaller 'hypermodern' facility that is designed to treat emergency cases, provide urgent interventions and in all cases work hand in hand with the community to either reduce or prevent admission and to enable swift step down and rehabilitation.

We also believe that the children of Warrington deserve state of the art facilities for their care where admission is required and not have to travel to either Liverpool or Knowsley.

We believe that Warrington mothers should have choice in their birth plans, which should include obstetric-led care, midwifery-led care, community-led care and home birth. We want to offer that choice through the provision of Free Standing Midwifery Units in addition to obstetric care where high risk pregnancies indicate.

Most of all, we believe that no Warrington patient should have to travel out of the borough for planned procedures.

We ask the Council to note the Trust's intention to apply under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for Section 106 contributions on new housing projects to meet a projected revenue gap created by increased service demand from new residents. We note that precedent has already been established at South Warwickshire where Stratford Hospital opened a new acute care facility in August 2017 funded by developers to the tune of a levy of circa £1500 per home. According to the Council's plan for 'a minimum of 22,260 new homes by 2017' we equate this to £33.9m, insufficient to build a new hospital but a very significant support to help us develop the care facilities that the towns increasing young and old population will require.

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Insofar as we are responding as an organisation, we will restrict our commentary on specific elements out with our remit such as the choice of sites for development, however can assure the Council we have made significant efforts to ensure that our 4400 staff have been made fully aware of both the consultation and how they can contribute on a personal level.

Please proceed to Q7 for our full response.

Question 7

Do you agree with our Preferred Development Option for meeting Warrington's future development needs?

Response:

The Trust welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation but notes the following:

1. The involvement of health partners to date has been minimal, the Trust was invited to the first engagement about the Local Plan earlier in the year as an 'after thought' and despite responding to that consultation has yet to receive any formal response or acknowledgement or be further involved in the drawing up of the Preferred Development Option.
2. The invitation to respond to this consultation was sent to the Trust on the day that the consultation opened, allowing minimal time to gather views from our extensive range of stakeholders – not least our patients and our staff – before the consultation closed. We were pleased that the Council subsequently extended the consultation until the end of September yet missed a valuable opportunity to hold an exhibition or 'drop in' session at our hospital which has a significant footfall of Warrington patients, staff and visitors every day.

As an organisation we applaud the vision of the Council for the Borough, we, like the Council, wish the town to grow, develop and prosper. However, we were surprised and disturbed to note that in the Council's 60-page consultation document that while 'infrastructure' was used liberally, the word 'hospital' was completely absent – yet the growing population would be supported by four new primary schools and a large secondary school.

We are left wondering where the Council hopes we will treat the anticipated surge in population of at least 50K when this hospital is already struggling to treat its existing patients?

The population profile for the Borough of Warrington as a whole is older than the national average making it an older person's location. And The Council's own JSNA of 2016-17 notes that 'There is a need to develop a comprehensive, joined-up, local healthy ageing strategy to address the needs of older people.' While we as a system are working hard to this end, we know that the reality is capped public sector funding for the foreseeable future, reducing numbers of health and social care professionals coming into the system and the loss of interest by the private sector in the provision of

Question 7 cont./

Vital support/step down care. We also note the fundamental public health strategies driving a healthier population but this will in reality take one if not two generations to impact in the way that we need.

We note that in the zones set out for Warrington that a 'healthcare facility' was listed as part of the infrastructure but no detail as to what this would be. **We ask the Council to provide more information about this and detail on how it plans to involve the healthcare provider sector in designing a facility for the needs of the local populace.** Without specifics, developers will 'nod' to the planning restrictions by building a single GP service which will not prevent emergency admissions to the hospital, even if it were possible to staff the Borough to even 90% of the required GPs.

In providing our response as an organisation we confine our attention on the Council's first Strategic Objective for the Local Plan: *"To enable the transition of Warrington from a New Town to a New City through the ongoing regeneration of Inner Warrington, the delivery of strategic and local infrastructure, the strengthening of existing neighbourhoods and the creation of new sustainable neighbourhoods whilst delivering a minimum of 22,260 new homes (equating to 1,113 per year) between 2017 and 2037."*

1. The ongoing regeneration of inner Warrington

We struggle to see why the Council has not included the Warrington Hospital site in its plans given that the site is prime retail, community and/or housing space for the new inner city. The development of the inner town will bring more people into the town which we welcome, yet this will result in even more congestion on the neighbouring roads and roads feeding to the bridges and motorways – given we have at least 3K staff, 100K inpatients (all with visitors) and 250,000 outpatient appointments moving in and around the site each year.

We ask the Council to consider the provision of an alternative site for Warrington Hospital to a location served by public transport and good road networks and that is accessible to the people of Warrington.

Question 7 cont./

2. The delivery of strategic and local infrastructure

As described earlier, we were disappointed to see that no provision of hospital facilities had been considered in the plan, yet 4 new primary schools and a large secondary school were both included. We also note that significant work is planned to include new roadways and additional bridge access. Yet healthcare provision has been largely ignored save the 'nod' to healthcare facility.

Warrington needs a new hospital located on a more suitable site that is accessible for all.

The Council is aware of the Trust's vision for Warrington Hospital, that of a smaller 'hypermodern' facility that is designed to treat emergency cases, provide urgent interventions and in all cases work hand in hand with the community to either reduce or prevent admission and to enable swift step down and rehabilitation.

We also believe that the children of Warrington deserve state of the art facilities for their care where admission is required and not have to travel to either Liverpool or Knowsley.

We believe that Warrington mothers should have choice in their birth plans, which should include obstetric-led care, midwifery-led care, community-led care and home birth. We want the facility to offer that choice through the provision of Free Standing Midwifery Units in addition to obstetric care where high risk pregnancies indicate.

And most of all, we believe that no Warrington patient should have to travel out of the borough for planned procedures.

In summary: We ask the Council to note the Trust's intention to apply under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for Section 106 contributions on new housing projects to meet a projected revenue gap created by increased service demand from new residents. We note that precedent has already been established at South Warwickshire where Stratford Hospital opened a new acute care facility in August 2017 funded by developers to the tune of a levy of circa £1500 per home. According to the Council's plan for 'a minimum of 22,260 new homes by 2017' we equate this to £33.9m, insufficient to build a new hospital but a very significant support to help us develop the care facilities that the towns increasing young and old population will require.

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