



Leicester
City Council

**JOINT LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND
HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

31 March 2008

**REFERRAL TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS LEICESTER PUBLIC
AND PATIENT INVOLVEMENT FORUM**

Report of the Town Clerk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report informs the Committee of a recent referral to the Joint Committee of the above matter by the University Hospitals Leicester (UHL) Patient and Public Involvement Forum (PPIF).

2. SUMMARY

The PPIF's referral is appended in full and comprises:

- Covering letter from the PPIF (via support organisation the Carers' Federation) to the Chair of the Committee (dated 10 March 2008)
- Extract from PPIF Minutes (undated)
- Letter from the PPIF to the Audit Commission (dated 18 December 2007)
- Letter from the Audit Commission to the Carers' Federation (dated 3 January 2008)
- Letter from KPMG (Appointed Auditors for UHL) (dated 22 January 2008)
- Letter from the PPIF to KPMG (dated 25 January 2008)
- Letter from KPMG to PPIF (dated 25 February 2008)
- Letter from PPIF to KPMG (dated 7 March 2008)
- Press release from PPIF (dated 5 March 2008)

3. OPTIONS

Legal advice is being sought in respect of the Committee's powers in relation to this referral. The options available to the Committee will be advised at the meeting.

4. REPORT

The Committee will be aware of the circumstances leading to this referral. The former UHL Chief Executive, Dr Peter Reading, retired on 21 September 2007. Dr Reading's retirement was agreed between himself and the UHL Trust, and, as is normal practice for individual staffing matters, details of this agreement remain confidential. Dr Reading

did not work a notice period. On 28 September 2007, UHL announced the appointment of Derek Smith as interim Chief Executive, to take up his post on 1 October 2007, for a three month period.

Between October and December 2007, there was significant local media coverage regarding both Dr Reading's departure and Mr Smith's appointment – in the case of the former primarily around the decision-making surrounding his departure, and in the case of the latter, the cost of the interim arrangements.

The UHL Patient and Public Involvement Forum have long expressed their concern about the Trust's handling of the matter. In December 2007, the PPIF passed a resolution referring the matter to the Audit Commission. The attached correspondence shows the detail of that referral and the Trust Auditor's response.

In its letter to the Committee dated 10 March 2008, the PPIF invites the Committee "to require the Auditor to release the evidence gathered and justify his opinion that the very large sum so far expended in this connection from the public purse represented proper value for money".

A supplementary paper will be circulated before the meeting; it is anticipated that this will

- Provide some context on the respective roles of, and relationships between, the PPIF, the Committee, and the Audit Commission;
- Offer the Committee guidance on its powers in respect of the request from the PPIF
- Set out options for action in responding to the referral.

5. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for the Committee arising from this report.

5.2 Legal Implications

These will be reported at the meeting.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within the Report	References
Equal Opportunities	No		
Policy	No		
Sustainable and Environmental	No		
Crime and Disorder	No		
Human Rights Act	No		

Elderly/People on Low Income	No	
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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None.

8. CONSULTATIONS

None.

9. REPORT AUTHOR

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