



THE SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSFORMATION PLAN FOR LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND

Unite the Union Community Branch Leicester Area - Submission to the Leicester City Council Scrutiny Commission

Unite believes that our NHS must be:

- universally available and free at the point of use
- publicly accountable, publicly funded and publicly run
- clinical driven and evidence led

This branch has serious concerns about the STP for LLR. The Plan includes many cuts to services and reflects underfunding in the health service. £22bn of cuts are being pushed through across the NHS, using STPs to force the cuts through. We oppose the STP and call on the Leicester City Council to oppose it.

In Leicester, patients will be affected by the closure of hundreds of hospital beds in University Hospitals of Leicester. It is evident that the three Leicester hospitals are already under pressure and the chief executive of the hospital has recently said that UHL actually needs more beds not less. He claimed in the Mercury that a further 113 beds are required and that beds are occupied 95% of the time which is above the safe level of 85%. UHL sees vast numbers of patients each year, reflecting the level of need in the local population and we cannot see any justification for closing beds.

The STP also says there will be the closures of community hospitals in the county and in Rutland but as well as taking services away from people living in those parts of the region it will mean placing more pressure on beds in Leicester.

We believe that these service changes are not based on clinical evidence and demand that the NHS produces the clinical evidence they have used.

One of our biggest concerns is about what will happen to NHS staff. Staff working in the community already have very heavy workloads. Even if more staff are recruited, will there be

enough staff to carry out the work, as more staff will be needed because of the amount of travelling necessary to look after patients who are scattered across a wide area in the county and Rutland? The STP says the workforce is going to get smaller but we cannot understand how this can happen if patients are getting more of their care in the community.

The STP has been developed in secret and even now there is no proper input from patients, staff, trade unions and the public. We also believe some information has also not been shared with councillors and some information is still being kept secret. It is an undemocratic plan, and so far as we can see does not even have a legal basis. The lack of legal basis for the restructuring means that there are no legal or accountability structures linking the organisations and individuals involved, while there are no procedures for determining how disagreements are to be resolved in the new informal bureaucracies.

Overall, the STP looks like little more than a cost cutting exercise. It will make our health services worse because the government is not funding the health service and social care properly. We expect the city council to defend our services and not to go along with this latest attempt to destroy our health service. The government does not support the NHS and in our view is trying to privatise it. A Labour council must play its part in opposing these privatising and cost-cutting policies. The government want the health service to become so bad that people who can afford it will go private. Everybody else will get a worse service.

Additional investment is needed in the health service – this will create jobs as well improve our health care services.

Leicester Area Community Branch

Unite the Union

19th March 2017